# MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

NOVEMBER 2007

#294 $4 US $5 Canada

FINALLY PUNK
THE STORY OF AOA

HIPSHAKES

LEFTOVER CRACK

NEVERENDING PARTY

LA LUCHA PARA LA JUSTICA EN GUATEMALA

TRUCKS, DESERTS, AND BORDER WALLS: ONE PUNK'S JOURNEY FROM LIMA TO NEW YORK (PT. 2)

AND MORE...

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# MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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- Everywhere else: $10 each (air). 12 issue sub for $112 (airmail only). 6 issue sub for $59 (airmail only).

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**BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:** #148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 174-175, 179-197, 199-181, 184-210, 214-215, 218-227, 229-293 **See page 4 for pricing and other info.**

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## TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

### JUSTIN BRIGGS

- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- V/A-Propaganda Is Hippies-LP
- BAD DIRTY HATE-100%-EP
- TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- POISON CONTROL-The Violent Years-EP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- WALLS-The Crawl/Hands and Knees-45
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- OS ESTUDANTES-Album-LP / VIOLENT MINDS-EP & LP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-At War With Everybody-LP

### TIM BROOKS

- TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- VIOLENT MINDS-Just Kicked In-EP
- FYP-5 Year Plan-LP
- THE ARRIVALS-Marvels of Industry-LP
- LOST CAUSE-Kill What's Inside-LP
- MILLOY-More than a Machine-LP
- JET BOYS-Teenage Thunder Revisited-LP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS/OUTNAUTS-split EP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-At War With Everybody-LP

### MITCH CARDWELL

- LAMPS-II-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- WAX MUSEUMS -Traffic Violation-EP
- CHURCH POLICE-Gilligan's Wings-EP
- INTELLIGENCE-Deuteronomy-LP
- THE FLESHIES-LP
- YOUNG CANADIANS-LP
- DANGERLOVES-Lipsmart/So This is Love-45
- SNAKE FLOWER II-live
- LOS LLAMARADA-live

### ROB COONS

- TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-At War With Everybody-LP
- YOUNG OFFENDERS-Situations-EP
- VIOLENT MINDS-EP & LP
- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- DÖDSDÖMD-Beskada Var Vakra Varld-EP
- LOST CAUSE-Kill What's Inside-LP
- V/A-Propaganda Is Hippies-LP
- JET BOYS-Teenage Thunder Revisited-LP

### PAUL CURRAN

- BAD DIRTY HATE-100%-EP
- THE BAGS- LP / J CHURCH- LP
- BANANAS- LP / RADON-LP
- CANADIAN RIFLE-Cinder Block-EP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS/OUTNAUTS-split EP
- JUGGLING JUGULARS-When I See/Addicted-45
- KAKKA HÄTÄ 77-Totaalinen Kakkahätä-CD
- NEVERENDING PARTY/THE REACTION-split EP
- SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P.-Play Our Sound-EP
- YOUNG OFFENDERS-Situations-EP

### JONATHAN FLOYD

- THE ARRIVALS-Marvels of Industry-LP
- CANADIAN RIFLE-Cinder Block-EP
- CLOCKCLEANER-Babylon Rules-CD
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- INTELLIGENCE-Deuteronomy-LP
- PEABODYS/STEINWAYS-split EP
- RADON-Metric Buttloads of Rock-LP
- WAX MUSEUMS-Traffic Violation-EP
- LAS LLAMARADAS-live
- WITCHES WITH DICKS-Felix Havoc's Boots-EP

### LAYLA GIBBON

- DAVE JONES XPERIENCE-Mean People Suck-CD
- OS ESTUDANTES-Album-LP
- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- CHURCH POLICE-Gilligan's Wings-EP
- SOCIALCIDE-Burn In Hell, Bundy-EP
- THE BAGS-All Bagged Up...-LP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- V/A-Propaganda Is Hippies-LP
- WITCHES WITH DICKS-Felix Havoc's Boots-EP

### CHRIS HUBBARD

- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- CLUSTERFUCK-How The West Was Won-LP
- BAD DIRTY HATE-100%-EP
- OS ESTUDANTES-Album-LP
- V/A-All Your Ears Can Hear...-2xCD
- V/A-Propaganda Is Hippies-LP
- DANGERLOVES-Lipsmart/So This is Love-45
- LOST CAUSE-Kill What's Inside-LP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS/OUTNAUTS-split EP

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# TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

## KENNY KAOS

- DOME LA MUERTE AND THE DIGGERS-EP
- THE FEELERS-2007 European Tour-EP
- MANNEQUIN MEN-Private School/Sewers-45
- JET BOYS-Teenage Thunder Revisited-LP
- THE BAGS-All Bagged Up...-LP
- JOHNNY MOPED-The Johnny Moped Bootleg Tapes Vol I&II-2xLP
- TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Life Ain't Cool-EP
- THE TEENERS-Hit Me-EP
- PEABODYS/STEINWAYS-split EP

## CAROLYN KEDDY

- LAMPS-II-LP / JOHNNY MOPED-2xLP
- HOME BLITZ-CD / TAXI-Dead Girl-EP
- NEVERENDING PARTY/THE REACTION-split EP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP
- YOUNG OFFENDERS-Situations-EP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS/OUTNAUTS-split EP
- BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Life Ain't Cool-EP
- CHURCH POLICE-Gilligan's Wings-EP
- INSTANT ASSHOLE-DUI or Die-EP
- INTELLIGENCE-Deuteronomy-LP

## RAY LUJAN

- CHURCH POLICE-Gilligan's Wings-EP
- THE ARRIVALS-Marvels of Industry-LP
- THE BAGS-LP / YOUNG OFFENDERS-EP
- SMALL ARMS DEALER-Patron Saint of Disappointment-CD
- PEABODYS/STEINWAYS-split EP
- THE BLACK MARKET-Subtle As a Brick-CD
- INTELLIGENCE-LP / J CHURCH-The Horror of Life-LP
- THE FLATLINERS-The Great Awake-CD
- BOMB THE MUSIC INDUSTRY!-Get Warmer-CD
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-live / SHAM 69-live

## ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- YOUNG OFFENDERS-Situations-EP
- BRAND DISLOYALTY-Nostalgia Peddlers-EP
- NEVERENDING PARTY/THE REACTION-split EP
- MILLOY-More than a Machine-LP
- JOHNNY MOPED-2xLP
- RADON-Metric Buttloads of Rock-LP
- WAX MUSEUMS-EP / THE ARRIVALS-LP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- DRONGOS FOR EUROPE-Dance When Maggie's Dead-EP
- TWO DOLLARS OUT THE DOOR-Champagne of Fears-LP

## BRUCE ROEHRS

- VIOLENT MINDS-We Are Nothing-LP
- TIME TO ESCAPE-Mr. Popular-EP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-LP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- FOR THE WORSE-Blood, Guts, Going Nuts-LP
- BAD DIRTY HATE-100%-EP
- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- LOST CAUSE-Kill What's Inside-LP
- DÖDSDÖMD-EP / TOTAL ABUSE-Sex Pig-EP
- V/A-Propaganda is Hippies-LP

## CISSIE SCURLOCK

- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- V/A-Propaganda is Hippies-LP
- OS ESTUDANTES-Album-LP
- CANADIAN RIFLE-EP / SLEEPWALKERS RIP-EP
- POISON CONTROL-The Violent Years-EP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-LP
- EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-LP & live
- WAX MUSEUMS-Traffic Violation-EP
- UNDER PRESSURE-Come Clean-LP
- BAD DIRTY HATE-EP / LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-EP

## MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- V/A-Propaganda is Hippies-LP
- OS ESTUDANTES-Album-LP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-State of Illusion-EP
- PUNCH IN THE FACE-LP
- THE BAGS-LP
- CLUSTERFUCK-How The West Was Won-LP
- BAD DIRTY HATE-100%-EP
- SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P.-Play Our Sound-EP
- DEATH TOKEN-4-Track Attack-EP
- SOCIALCIDE-Burn In Hell, Bundy-EP

## ZINE TOP TEN

- *Distort #15*
- *Give Me Back Summer '07 issue*
- *Loserdom #16*
- *Love in the Time of Scabies #3*
- *Mix Tapers Do It Better #2*
- *Most Punks Are Total Arseholes #3*
- *Plankwalk #1*
- *Smear Campaign #9*
- *Treble High, Talent Low #3*
- *Zine World #25*


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# A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

**#153/Feb '96.** Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

**#156 pt 1/May '96.** Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

**#156 pt 2/May '96.** Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

**#161/Oct '96.** Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

**#174/Nov '97.** Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity. "Education" theme issue.

**#175/Dec '97.** One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

**#179/April '98.** Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

**#180/May '98.** Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

**#181/June '98.** Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

**#184/Sept '98.** Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

**#186/Nov '98.** Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

**#187/Dec '98.** Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

**#188/Jan '99.** Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

**#189/Feb '99.** Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

**#190/Mar '99.** John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

**#191/April '99.** Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

**#192/May '99.** Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

**#193/June '99.** Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

**#194/July '99.** Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

**#195/Aug '99.** Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

**#196/Sept '99.** Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

**#197/Oct '99.** Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

**#199/Dec '99.** Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

**#200/Jan '00.** American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

**#201/Feb '00.** Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

**#202/March '00**. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

**#204/May '00.** Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

**#206/July '00.** Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

**#207/Aug '00.** Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

**#208/Sept '00.** Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

**#209/Oct '00.** Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

**#210/Nov '00.** J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

**#214/Mar '01.** Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

**#215/April '01.** No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

**#218/July '01.** Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

**#221/Oct '01.** The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

**#222/Nov '01.** Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

**#223/Dec '01.** "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

**#224/Jan '02**. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

**#225/Feb '02.** Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

**#227/Apr '02.** Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

**#229/June '02.** Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

**#230/July '02.** Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

**#231/Aug '02.** Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

**#232/Sept '02.** "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

**#233/Oct '02.** "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

**#234/Nov '02.** Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

**#235/Dec '02.** Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

**#236/Jan '03.** Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

**#238/Mar '03.** World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

**#239/Apr '03.** Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

**#240/May '03.** I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

**#241/June '03.** Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

**#242/July '03.** Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

**#243/Aug '03.** "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

**#244/Sept '03.** None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

**#245/Oct '03.** No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

**#246/Nov '03.** Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

**#247/Dec '03.** DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

**#248/Jan '04.** Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

**#249/Feb '04.** From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

**#250/Mar '04.** Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

**#251/April '04.** The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

**#252/May '04.** Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

**#253/June '04.** Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

**#254/July '04.** No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

**#255/Aug '04.** "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

**#256/Sep '04.** The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

**#257/Oct '04** The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

**#258/Nov '04.** Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

**#259/Dec '04.** Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

**#260/Jan '05.** Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

**#261/Feb '05.** Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

**#262/March '05.** Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

**#263/April '05.** All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

**#264/May '05.** Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

**#265/June '05.** Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

**#266/July '05.** The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

**#267/August '05**. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

**#268/September '05.** Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

**#269/October '05.** Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

**#270/November '05.** Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

**#271/December '05.** Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

**#272/January '06.** Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

**#273/February '06.** Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

**#274/March '06.** Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

**#275/April '06.** History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

**#276/May '06.** "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

**#277/June '06.** "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

**#278/July '06.** Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

**#279/August '06.** Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

**#280/September '06.** Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

**#281/October '06.** Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

**#282/November '06.** The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

**#283/December '06.** Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

**#284/January '07.** Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

**#285/February '07.** Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

**#286/March '07.** Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

**#287/April '07.** Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

**#288/May '07.** Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

**#289/June '07.** Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

**#290/July '07.** Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

**#291/August '07.** *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

**#292/September '07.** New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

**#294/October '07.** Punk and Immigration Issue. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

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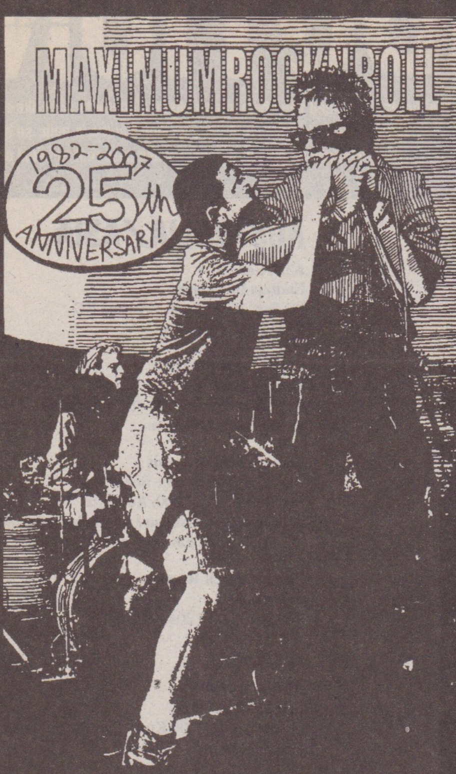


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# LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

*MRR—*

I'd like to say a big thank you to all of you guys who made an effort to compile an extensive immigration issue...with the current scapegoating of "illegals" and the chance of changing the policy disappearing from the visible horizon, it's really heartwarming to see that there are people in this country who don't deny us, people troubled from the beginning—otherwise we wouldn't be here, the right to be human beings. Thanks that you take a stand on this and other issues, rather than being just a music magazine. That's what punk supposed to be, after all—talk about the shit that is wrong.

Thanks again,

—Simon

http://www.myspace.com/simon_pantera

*MRR—*

On Saturday September 22nd, the Punk band Bombenalarm was involved in a serious accident when one of the front wheels blew and the van rolled over several times. Two people inside were heavily injured and at this time are still in intensive care in the hospital. The rest of the band is more or less in a better state with lighter injuries, and some of them are already out of the hospital.

One of the person in intensive care is Stachel who runs Unsociable/Hate Records. Due the fact that we don't know yet for how long Stachel will be in the hospital and how long he will be limited with his label actions, we, Franz (Sabotage Records) and Stevie (Ruin Nation Records) will take care of all his distribution, label, and bookkeeping issues as best we can. If you have any questions, are waiting for orders, restocks, tour van, etc., get in touch with us at: info@ruinnation.org or info@sabotagerecords.net with the subject "STACHEL." If you have outstanding debts or invoices, please pay as fast as you can. If you need a bank connection, get in touch.

The other person in intensive care is Sara, who also suffered diverse fractures. If you want to write either of them, we can let you know their postal addresses at the hospital upon request.

The tour van is fully damaged as well as most of their equipment. In addition to this, there will be huge amounts of money needed to pay for medical expenses as we don't know yet how much the insurance will cover. If you can show any solidarity, organize benefit shows/parties, all help is needed here. Thank you very much and please contact us for any further information at either of the above email addresses with the subject: "BOMBENALARM." Please do not send any emails via MySpace. Thanx.

—Franz & Stevie

*Dear Maximum Rocknroll—*

Last issue (#293, Oct. 2007) you reviewed the Grupo Sub-1 *Tercer grado en Leningrado* LP. Thanks for the review. Anyway, just writing to point out that the title is "Tercer grado en Leningrado" NOT "Tercer gradi en Leningrado". Funny enough, not only did you miss-title it in the review but also in the Top Ten section. A clear case of cut and paste madness I guess.

Thanks,

—Paco Mus

*Dear MRR—*

Hello, my name is Wretched Ryan. I sing for a San Francisco band called Hep-Si and am currently doing a six-month jail sentence in county jail for a probation violation. I'm 30 years old, and have been into punk rock since I was 13. Punk rock is my livelihood. I'm just writing to thank you guys. I've been getting issues sent to me, and it's been keeping me connected to music. Being a tattooed, mohawk-havin' punk rocker in jail sucks. But so little *MRR* give me a little peace of mind. Long live rock 'n' roll!

Yer friend,

—Wretched Ryan

*To Warkrime—*

Hey what's up, I read yr interview and letter in *MRR*. I wanted to address some things and give you my (probably unwanted) opinion on a few things. You say that you're anarchists; that's great, so am I. You're vegetarian; cool, I'm vegan. I'm not here to pile on you or take a piss or whatever you might be thinking. I'm not some fundamentalist or dogmatic dickhead either. I mean, my fav columnist in *MRR* is Mykel Board. I'm 36 yrs old, so I guess I'd be considered "old" by you and yr friends. I've been into and involved in punk rock for over 20 yrs (not like I'm "proud" of that or trying to make myself sound cool or anything). I'm bi, so I encounter homophobia all of the time, even from my own family members. I hear it at work, on the street, etc. I don't want to hear or encounter it at a show, from the band or people at the show. I'm at a show to escape from my 60-hour-a-week blue collar reality, not to deal with some homophobic or racist privileged suburban white kid who thinks its cool to be sketchy or dodgy for some sort of shock value.

When I hear someone say the word "fag," I get mad. I take it personally, becuz I am a fag. If someone around me says nigger or spic or fag, I'm liable to get pissed off and want to fucking hit them. Whether I do or not depends on my mood at the time or other factors. I've been involved in antifascist work/organizing, and if I want to hear that shit, I'll hang out at some right-wing Oi or lame street punk show. If my punching someone violates their freedom of speech or whatever, so be it, there's no such thing as freedom of speech in this fucked country anyway.

You cite various old skool bands and point to them as references. This argument is really weak and lame. I didn't like Nig Heist when I was in high school, and don't like them now. I don't think that Anal Cunt is funny either. I do like some GG Allin songs however. I'm not sitting here trying to "censor" you or whatever. I'm just trying to make you see why you piss people off. I checked out yr page on MySpace after reading the interview, and listened to a couple of your songs. I heard in one of yr songs you were talking about homeless people. You called them "disgusting" or whatever. I turned that shit off. As self-described "anarcho-syndicalists" you know as well as I do that the homeless are the lowest rung of the capitalist socioeconomic ladder. When some privileged white suburban kid shits on them or kicks them around, you have to see how fucked that is.

Maybe you think its funny or whatever to piss people off. I do too. I like to piss off and irritate people that I fucking hate. This is probably falling on deaf ears, and I'm sure you've heard all of this before a million times over. I usually don't respond or get involved in shit like this, but I really felt the need to give you my two cents, for what its worth.

Peace,

—K Dog

*Dear MRR—*

In the review section, you question why Warkrime would deliberately do something stupid, the same reason I wrote *MRR* that letter.

You piss off/enrage enough PC scene police conservative assholes, they get mad and feel the

need to call everyone that doesn't agree with them Nazis or sexist or homophobic. Much like how Joe McCarthy called everyone he didn't like a communist, the same reason Christians called people they don't like witches. It's the same thing. What you fail to realize is by doing this you give the people you hate and despise free publicity and free ad space. Much like something Ayn Rand said: You have been tricked into manufacturing the weapons for your own murderers. Maybe you PC witch-hunters should get organized; instead of un-American activities, un-punk rock activities. I like poking in your open sores and watching you twitch. Also, it's spelled Nothingisttrue—three T's, not two. Was the typo a deliberate attempt at censorship? So people who Google my band come up empty-handed? Or like Bob Black would say, "pink elephants." Why did you misprint my address in three places? You know my correct address. You send me my subscription every month...Jesus loves you.

Anyway, check out: Nothingisttrue. Three T's, dammit!

Sincerely,
Kyle/FTW
Kyle Nonneman #68528-065
Medical Center for Federal Prisoners
Post Office Box 4000
Springfield, MO 65807-4000

IMPORTANT: In addition to the video cameras described in the news section, ATM machines have cameras. The FBI filmed me making a phone call at a payphone across the street. ATM machines are everywhere. Cop cars are also equipped with video cameras. The recorder's in the trunk. Big Brother's watching you.

*Kyle,*
*I apologize for misprinting your address. It was not a deliberate attempt at censorship, your handwriting's just a little hard to read. And now you've got two letters in* MRR *mentioning your band...how's that for free ad space? By the way, while the reaction of the so-called "PC scene police" may be predictable in many cases (and yes, unjustified sometimes too), it's no less reactionary as the inevitable cries of "witch-hunt" that are sure to follow. Get my drift?*
*—Chris*

*MRR—*
Just wanted to throw a quick response to Kyle Nannemans' letter concerning the disconnect between civil disobedience and direct action. This is a debate that has been going on, and will continue to go on for a long time, but I just wanted to point out a couple things from my perspective, being a Non-Violent Anarcho-Syndicalist. I know, hard position to maintain... However, it seems to me that the goal of the punk scene, and activism in general, is raising awareness about issues and building communities of folks—people who are aware of those issues, who regularly participate in civil disobedience and even non-violent direct action (for example, I do not consider "violence against property" to be a real, or even a logically defensible phenomenon; it is, rather, a rhetorical tool of the state to brand those of us ready to physically alter our environment as violent, and thus justify violent response by "authorities"), in hopes of eventually toppling oppressive institutions, government or otherwise. I think that would probably be contested by a lot of people, but, anyhow, that's where my mind is. The strengths to this strategy, I think, outweigh the strengths of violent, anti-governmental action, for a couple of obvious reasons. 1) As in the case of the writer of that letter, violent direct action often puts you in prison, where you can't help much of anything. 2) Non-violent struggle is the most effective at securing permanent change, and case studies throughout history will, at least statistically speaking, prove that to be true. 3) I don't want to have anything to do with a revolution that utilizes the same tactics I call oppressive when employed by the state. The writer himself, in the name of whatever ideology he professes, believes it was justifiable for Timothy McVeigh to kill children, based on the possibility that they will grow up the way their parents are, become capitalist pigs beyond reform. I think it's kind of counterproductive to kill potential allies based on your belief that they could end up as something you hate.

I know it is only assumption on my part, but Kyle seems to be steeped in Nihilist rhetoric, and I think that this is probably where he gets some of his ideas.

Nihilism has a strong hold on a lot of people, and it's understandable—the world does seem hopeless sometimes, and things are regrettably fucked up in a lot of ways that seem unmanageable, unchangeable. But, in my opinion, that does not free us from the responsibility to show genuine concern and a desire to change things on behalf of the other living folks 'n' things with which we cohabitate, and a responsibility to deal with the problems of this world in a way that respects the personal (or animal) sovereignty inherent in our being. One of the founders of the Nihilist movement, Nietzsche, is often quoted, and misquoted, to suggest all sorts of things, but one thing that is often, and ironically, overlooked, is that nihilism was *not* his ideal, and in fact a big part of the reason he wrote was to illustrate for people the dreadful possibility of slipping towards nihilism. (See *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism.*)

I can imagine interpreting the scene in the way Kyle has—that we are a bunch of pushover whiners who aren't really changing anything, but I think another interpretation is possible. In my construct of the role of the punk scene in politics (and I think that it is shared by a good number of us) in the United States and globally, I see a networking leviathan that has the potential to put numbers on the front lines of varied resistances anywhere we are. I see further, that our interest in doing so has created many positive things that pose a challenge to the powers that be. Every FNB serve is illegal, every basement show is illegal, and everything we do as far as outreach in our neighborhoods, schools, communities, and lives, will eventually be the spear in the side of the state. And when the state is dead and gone, we will have a movement of non-violent, pro-collectivist affiliates ready to build the world we all deserve. So, I have been branded as "wordy" by a ton of my friends, so I'm going to sum up real quick. Violent actions are counterproductive to revolutionary aims (not including violence against property, which isn't violence), and peaceful revolution is the only way to secure a permanently transformed life for all of the people who we supposedly fight for.

And as an aside, the issue on immigration, I think, is the best issue I've read in a long time. I am working on a study of critical whiteness theory that goes a long way in explaining some of the things the kids interviewed are dealing with, and you guys did an amazing fucking job, everyone involved. Thanks!
—Eric Parkison

*Dear MRR—*
In 17 years of running a punk mail-order/distro in the UK, I've had my fair share of problems with labels regarding non-appearance of promised monies/trades. Most of these disputes have been amicably resolved without the necessity for more, let's say, personal interventions. Anyway, I've never had to resort to the standard "Moaning letter to *MRR*" but in this case I'm doing so to warn others about dealing with this particular individual.

In October 2005, I did a proposed trade with Yellow Dog of Berlin, Germany, a record shop that also has a label, mail-order and runs vans for touring bands. Sending 28 LPs and 45 7"s, I received 45 7"s in return, but, nearly *two years* on, am unable it seems to either get payment or trade for the 28 LPs, despite dozens of emails and endless promises from Sven, owner of Yellow Dog. Originally, I made the trade on the promise of copies of an LP by a Japanese band which Sven assured me was being released by a Berlin local. Months went by and said LP eventually began appearing in distro boxes worldwide, but I was told it originated in the USA. Fair enough. I informed Sven I'd like payment or a trade of other titles. Then I was told "We have no money." OK, I know how it is running a distro/label and I understand that money is tight, so I was told to pick some stock. The answer came back: "All that stuff has sold out" (a year on and the majority of it is still up in their web-shop). At this point I was beginning to get emails from other labels saying "Avoid this guy!" but I persisted, and was passed over to a guy called Iffen who works in the shop and first promised payment (again non-forthcoming, predictably) and then records (I picked a load more titles back in May this year and have heard nothing since). Any attempt to complain about this situation at the time was met by emails from Iffen claiming, variously, "I told him more than once to pay that fucking money," "I just work here," "Sven is the boss, not me," etc.

Obviously by now, two years on, I'm pretty sick of this bullshit. It's plain that, by the constant games and trying to palm me off with assorted lackeys, Sven has no intention of honouring his side of the trade. When I suggested that a letter to *MRR* might serve to inform others of his shady practices, he retorted: "A letter to *MRR*—you may as well write to my mother!" (Unwise to bring your family into it, Sven.)

I'm told he spends time in Copenhagen and that, promoting a recent Yellow Dog Festival in Berlin, he promised to fly in UK band Flyblown (needless to say, no tickets materialised, same old story), but one way or another we plan to sort this out and get our LPs or money. In the meantime, I'd like to warn any labels off dealing with Sven/Yellow Dog, and if anyone has had/is having similar problems with him, please let me know at the email address below. As one label said to me: "It's about time this parasite was shown up for what he really is."

Thanks,
—Mike
Inflammable Material, London, UK
mikeinflammable@gmail.com

*Dear MRR—*

I am a little out of it, and mostly leave things to punks like you doing such a good job, but I must object to a recent release of a pirated Lookout! album by the Christian band Fifteen on Plan-It-X. This was a cheap move and it made me fucking sick.

Plan-It-X may appear to be no more than a good time, and it was fun. But it also had strict discipline, principles, and a very clear dream of taking over the world through music and fun. You could call it a plan. One part of this plan was communal living, and it was this part that always fueled the Iabel so well. Another part waa total opposition to Christianity. Although there aren't songs to sing along to about this, it was a central ideal of the label that people were introduced to as they became more involved. A bass player who tried to hide his Christianity was sent packing in fear of his life, and a musician in a folk rock outfit threw out his Bible after deliberate consideration and discussion.

I can hear the counter arguments you've got laid out already, as old as Saint Augustine, like everything about Christianity. You'll say you've always been crazy and paranoid about Chriatians, God can be used as a metaphor for hope, some people are mystics but not religious, and that it is impossible to root out the Christians and you'll make youraelf a nervous wreck.

I am older and have made many mistakes but I still think the plan sounds good for the most part. I think your arguments can be swiftly demolished. The Christian in question will start preaching insanely any time a fool lets him near a microphone. If his mysticism contains anything not found in establishment Christian churches, it's news to me. Are the fans of his band mostly crazy mystics or boring, creepy, conservative people one of which recently freaked out on me when I tried to go back home and said "What will your parents think of this?" about my attire. I'm 31, fucking bitch, from What Else? records, my parents can fuck off and so can you if they have aproblem with how I dress. Maybe if I was ripping people off or lost to heavy drugs you should say something, but why did you have to say that about anything I did that was fucking cool?

Back to the point, his brand of Christianity is particularly hypocritical, savage, ignorant, and selfish and has much in common with the backwoods preachers where I grew up. I think he could please the most bigoted Chriatians. Hope is not to be found in God but in hard work to change the world, not in God but in the person who puts a blanket on a sleeping stranger, or the person who invites the lonely fag to come and walk around all night and crash in a giant bed with ten other people in a house that also is home to a weird heavy metal band we constantly make fun of. That's you and me, remember, that's how we fucking met.

I spit on all mysticism if it paves the way for apathy and compromise, for giving up everything for the nuclear family, like the mystic anarchist at the tattoo shop. And you might be right, I might be crazy, but I'm going to put on my Christian killer shirt again. Down with Christianity, up with hope. I'd rather listen to any fucking new band reviewed in this magazine than here Fifteen.

—Sam
PO Box 3995
Berkeley, CA 94703

*Chris & MRR Crew—*

Hey, thanks for printing my letter last issue. Real quick—regarding the war, I know I'm not gonna change your mind, but let me just state some facts and maybe you can see where I'm coming from. First off, we (American people) wanted the war; if we hadn't wanted it we wouldn't be there. Regardless of why we're there, we're there for the duration—WE ARE THERE! Period. We might as well support the cause, not hinder it. If we don't fight them over there we'll be fighting them here on American streets. Think about that, suicide bombers and IEDs on the streets over here, having to worry about being blown up while you get your morning coffee fix at Java Jungle. If this fight is worth doing, if America truly has an unquestionable moral imperative to win, then we have to wage it with everything we've got! Do you agree? Otherwise, why are we there? Not to sound trite or make light of the situation, but it's like going into a football game and not giving 100% and your fans cheering against you.

Nations go to war over ideas and politics, but minds can change and politics shift. By their nature, matters of state are fluid and inconstant. What is constant in war is the humanity of the warrior, and the pain of those left behind. Anyway, prison fuckin' sucks! And believe it or not, we have our own little wars going on right here, people dying, the whole nine yards, usually over nothing. Everyday is like an episode of *Survivor* or something, very fucked. On a lighter note, musically speaking, you mentioned seeing Blood For Blood, Bruisers, and Swingin' Utters. I never had the privilege of BFB or Bruisers—you must be from the East Coast—but I saw Swingin' Utters a few times myself (*Juvenile Product*... and *Streets of San Francisco* are a couple of my all-time faves). One memorable time seeing them was in Ventura with Supersuckers and my buds Social D. There was a bunch of Hell's Angels at the show, Ventura being a HA stronghold—a lot of them are ex-Ventura skinhead dogs. It was a good show and they invited Ness back to their clubhouse afterwards. I've been into this scene for a long time now, some would say too long—oh well. There's not too many of the classics you could mention that I haven't seen, including Minor Threat—I still have pictures of that show somewhere. They fuckin' ripped and to this day I think back on it a lot. I distinctly remember Ian's shirt—it said "18 and Free." Pretty much every show at Olympic Auditorium and Fender's. How's this for ironic—the man just brought me a letter from my homeboy Chuck, whom I haven't heard from in years (literally) and these are his exact words: "Are you rotting like a mummy in there? I just went and saw Fear, Agent Orange, Bad Religion, Circle Jerks, Dickies, Adolescents in Carson last weekend. It was insane, all those bands were so good. Killer!" Fucked up, huh? Talk about hard-timin'. Music is one of the things that keeps me somewhat sane in this hellhole, along with exercise, and I just started correspondence courses at Lassen College, which has turned out to be pretty cool. I'm taking Anthropology, Psychology, English, Math. But yeah, Hank III equals sanity everyday, along with the rest of my collection: US Bombs, Smut Peddlers, Sham 69, Bruisers, Menace, Dropkicks, Lars, Pogues, Flogging Molly, Cash, Hank, Hank III, DI, Street Dogs, so I'm doin' alright on that end. With that, I'm going to get this in the wind and sign off in my usual hardcore manner—keep up the good work, keep the faith and DON'T LET 'EM GRIND YA DOWN!

Sincerely,
—Derek Bryan #J-03365
HDSP B-1-128
PO Box 3030
Susanville, CA 96127

*Derek—*

*I appreciate you offering your point of view. I do disagree with some of the "facts" you stated though... While polls taken around the time the war started in 2003 showed roughly anywhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of Americans supported invading Iraq (as opposed to the only 33% who support the war now), that's still millions and millions who did not—so ya can't really say (all) the American people "wanted the war." There were massive protests across the country (not to mention the world) at the time of the invasion. I would also strongly disagree with your claim that "if we don't fight them over there we'll be fighting them here." First of all, Iraq's*

*links to al-Qaeda have been seriously questioned, if not completely disproven. But regardless, why do you think there are groups of people who want to commit acts of terrorism in America? There's not gonna be one simple answer to that question (and it sure as hell is NOT "because they hate our freedom"—gimme a break), but I'm pretty sure that invading and occupying countries in the Middle East is not going to improve potential terrorists' opinions of America. What I'm saying here is that America's foreign policy (not limited to Iraq) often has dire consequences for non-Americans, and that if America doesn't want people committing terrorism against its citizens, it should look into changing its way of dealing with the rest of the world. That's my way of thinking about it. I'm not saying diplomacy is infallible, but considering how the war has gone so far, it doesn't seem like that's really working out either. Finally, you ask "why are we there?" I would say it sure ain't 'cause we've got a "moral imperative"! And I definitely don't look at the war as a kind of football game. Sheesh... So Derek, it seems like we're doomed to disagree about this. I am sorry you're in prison though; I'm sure it's no picnic but it seems like at least you've got a positive attitude about it. Keep listening to Crucifix and hang in there, and maybe even consider some of my "peace-loving hippie" views on Iraq.. meanwhile I'll do my best not to let 'em grind me down.*
*—Chris*

*MRR—*

The Immigration Issue rocked my world, especially the *Planes, Boats, Buses, and Feet: One Punk's Journey From Lima to New York* article. I am on the edge of my seat for part two and am thinking this is an independent film in the making—intense shit for sure.

Anyway, below is our fight—we don't go looking for trouble, it finds us. NBD. We deal with it. The bottom line is we're not going to take the shit and we lead by example. Eat our fuck. Right?

Long story short: I got on a Miami Metro Dade Transit (MMDT) bus, and as I did, an elderly Hispanic lady was passing out religious brochures. I went to the back of the bus where I sat down in this area all alone. Seeing the lady passing out her stuff, I put five 3" x 5" promotionals for my band on the empty seats. The Hispanic bus driver saw me doing this and pointed at me through the rear-view mirror but started his route.

Five minutes later he stopped the bus in the "not so good" part of town and came to the back of the bus and told me to "pick up the papers of get off the bus." I objected and asked him why he would bother me setting alone not bothering anyone when the lady was bothering people passing out her stuff. He replied and I quote: "Because she's not a Nazi passing out Nazi propaganda!!"

I of course objected and the driver basically kidnapped he bus, not letting passengers off at designated stops as they had requested, in his attempts to, as he said, "Get a cop to get my racist Nazi ass off his bus." He did indeed get a cop to expel me from the bus and I complained to the Transit Powers That Be. However, in doing so, they have *never once* apologized and have basically said I was the one at fault in putting my papers on the seats, no matter that such a violation is *not* posted anywhere in the bus rules and regulations. Only in the Banana Republic!! A *total Twilight Zone* moment!!

So I have filed a Federal Court Reverse Race Discrimination/Defamation of Character/Slander/False Imprisonment/Violation of Free Speech/Infliction of Emotional Damages lawsuit on my own behalf and am notifying the media to further expose these morons to the world. And to make matters worse, MMDT had received how much from the Department of Homeland Security?? And they don't even have cameras on the buses to record such outrageous actions by their own employees, much less someone who could want to do the general public harm? Only in the Banana Republic otherwise known as Dade County, Florida.

Keep up the kickass work at *MRR* and eat the fucking day. Consume it.
—Mark, nuclearskull.com

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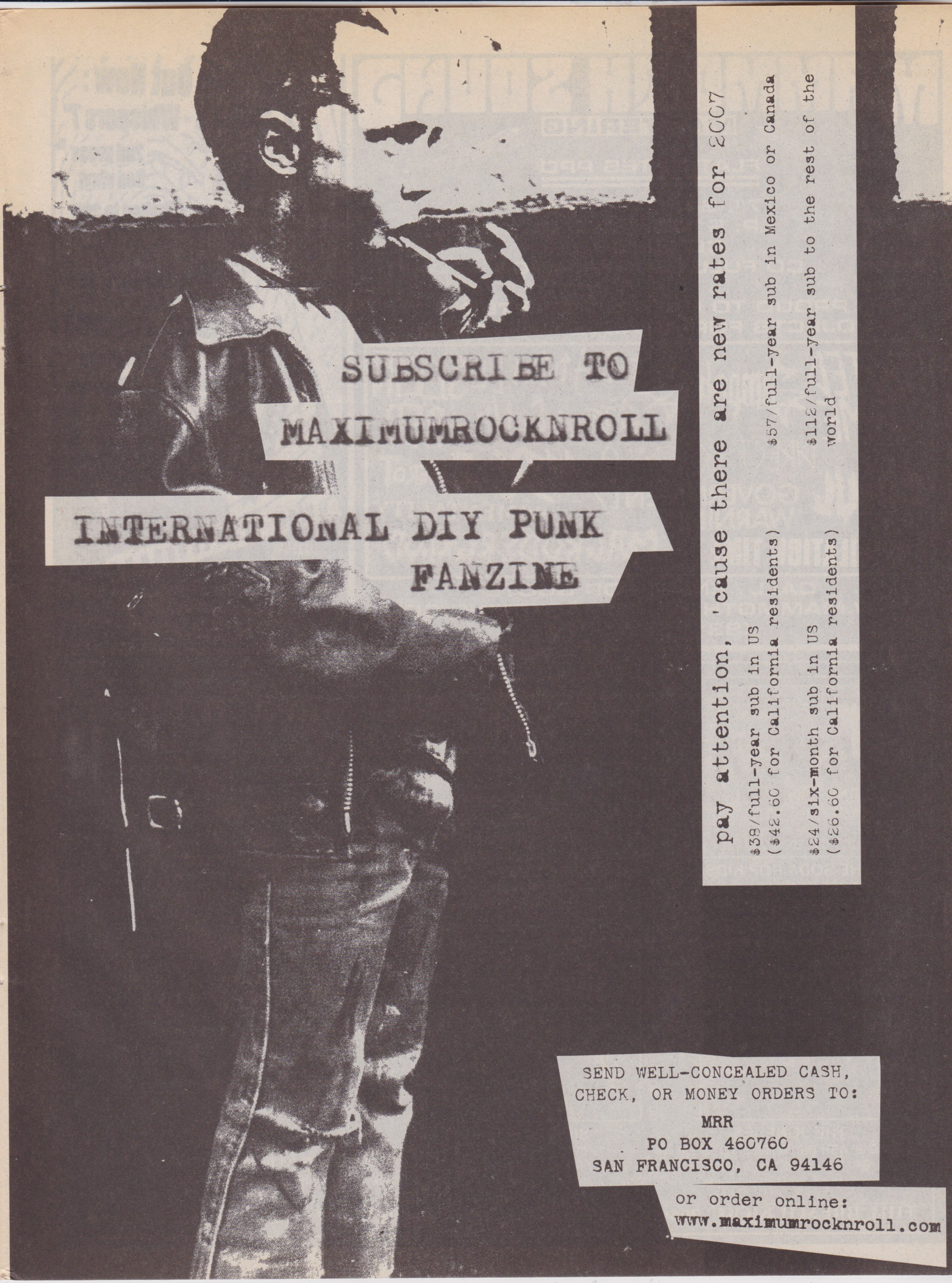
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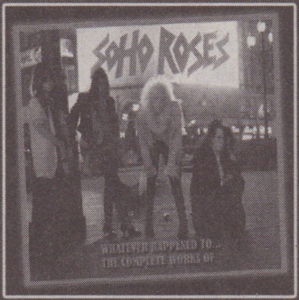


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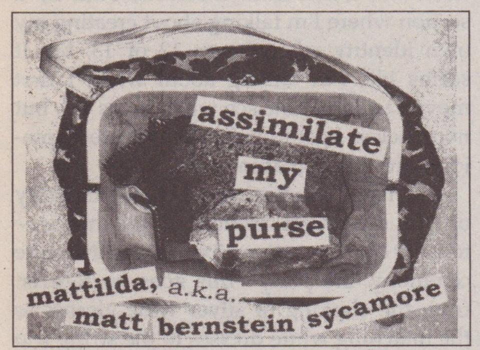



**Longing for Exactly What Leaves Us With Such Longing in the First Place**

About two years ago, I received an email from Caren Block that read as follows:

*Hi Mattilda. I read your interview in Bitch magazine and experienced a political and filmic revelation that leads me to you now. My business partner, Paula Dowd, and I are indie filmmakers in Cambridge, Mass., and we want to talk to you about your willingness to appear in our feature-length documentary currently in production. It is based loosely on gay marriage in Texas and primarily focuses on two women who recently held a commitment ceremony there and then married in Canada. I would like to talk to you about the possibility of intercutting the juxtaposition of your views on cultural erasure and anti-assimilationist politics.*

I'll admit that, after first talking to Caren on the phone, I was even more confused about my potential place within this movie, but she and Paula agreed to fly out to San Francisco and meet with me. They showed me their first movie, a short called *Everything Good* about a middle-aged lesbian who decides to hire a hooker while in Amsterdam. What was refreshing about it was that both characters were outside of conventional beauty myths, and neither sex work nor sexuality was pathologized or minimized. Then they showed me some of the footage for their new movie, endless angles of the wedding but also some incredibly honest talk about childhood abuse and trauma. It seemed that Caren and Paula were critical of (gay) marriage, but wanted to actualize that liberal mythology of showing different sides to the story and allowing the viewer to make up hir own mind. To be honest, after years of articulating an anti-assimilationist politic, only to see endless media coverage that framed the gay marriage debate as one between foaming-at-the-mouth Christian fundamentalists and rabid gay assimilationists, it was refreshing to think about how an actual conversation between queers who disagreed about marriage could take place—even if I was worried that I'd become some sideshow in a pro-marriage spectacle, I thought it was worth the risk.

Caren and Paula flew out to film me several months later. They shot about four hours of footage in my apartment—talking about surviving my parents' abuse, creating chosen family, supporting myself as a whore, developing radical queer outsider politics, and the horror of assimilation turned out to be (surprise, surprise) emotional. It was also interesting and intense spending such concentrated time with Caren and Paula, who seemed to feel a motherly bond towards me—they were much more mainstream in their life choices than the queers I'm usually around, with upper-middle-class careers (Caren in human resources, although I'll admit I don't exactly know what that means, and Paula in—gasp!—real estate. I've spent a great deal of time going on tirades against gay realtors, so I think Paula was initially a bit nervous to tell me this aspect.) But, yes, the filming process got quite intimate and even tense towards the end, when it became clear from their questions that Caren and Paula were in disagreement about gay marriage (perhaps to engage in this conversation is another reason for the movie?) Caren was against ("While I believe anyone should have the right to marry if they so choose, I won't be in line at City Hall any time soon"), Paula is for.

I was glad to see that Caren and Paula were using fancy lighting—nothing worse than being in a talking-heads documentary where every nightmarish flaw is visible, dammit—I mean, video close-ups of faces without makeup on the big screen: nightmare. I also got them to agree to shoot a moment when they emerge in the frame—forget that invisible documentarian drama! I'll also admit that after they left I started crying—probably all of the emotions from talking with passion and vulnerability for so long, but also because I felt a connection to them—a connection that in some ways was surprising.

Caren and Paula insisted that I would see the movie before it was finished, but I've heard that so many times from photographers and writers and it's only happened once—I understand that people get caught up in their projects, and don't necessarily have time or energy or the drive to show someone an unfinished version. Wait, that sounds a bit too "understanding"—sure, I would have loved to see that rough cut, but no, it did not surprise me that I didn't get a chance. I didn't see the movie (or any of the footage of me) until I was on tour for *Nobody Passes*, staying with Caren's best friend in Somerville, Massachusetts, and Caren gave me a (very professional-looking) DVD.

Caren's hospitality was quite touching—she picked me up at the bus station, got me groceries, brought her friends to my reading—her best friend worked in corporate something-or-other, something big where she traveled all the time but had a huge house with a gorgeous guest room and that's where I stayed. In many ways, this friend was an instigator of the exact type of gentrification I fight against (she even talked about how the lesbians had cleaned up the neighborhood), but she'd also just gone through a gender transition (from femme to butch, although her butch demeanor was so striking that it was hard to imagine her in any other gender), and she was so open and honest—we had a sweet bond that made me think about the possibilities for analysis, closeness, and support in unlikely places.

So, yes, *Truths and Transformations*—that's the title of the movie, by the way. The first time I watched it was in Somerville, late at night when I was completely exhausted and I didn't exactly know what to think. I mean, the movie practically starts with me saying, "Wanting to be part of a system that wants you dead is suicidal—that's assimilation, that's cultural erasure" (followed by lesbian folk music). Then the scene shifts to show Kathryn Omarkhail and Denise Bennett, the lesbians getting married in Texas—Denise a

teacher and sports coach from Kansas, Kathryn a psychotherapist from Mississippi. Sure, the movie does focus primarily around Kathryn and Denise, but also includes John, a gay man who came out when he was 66, lesbian comedian Julie Goldman, and many of Kathryn and Denise's friends and family members, including a straight couple with strained and uncomfortable reactions to each other's opinions that could surely serve as a warning about marriage for anyone paying attention.

Now I've watched the movie twice more, so I have plenty to say. The movie is polished and raw, elegant and messy, conflicted and determined, difficult and confusing and risky and deep. There's a lot to absorb, and I do think Caren and Paula have managed to engage the audience in a complicated conversation, which is certainly a good start.

Sometimes the movie works very subtly, like when Kathryn talks about first meeting Denise, touching her stomach and thinking, "this is the most ripped girl I've ever touched for sure." This sexual honesty feels refreshing and sweet, as does Denise's discussion of whether to have her father play the traditional role in marriage: "We don't want it to be like someone else is giving us away, like we're owned by our parents."

One of the most intense parts of the movie is the ongoing interview with John Ballard, who ended 44 years of drunkenness that eventually became life-threatening by embracing the gay identity he'd denied his whole life. His honesty about alcoholism, marriage, and incest is wrenching. Describing his home life at four years old, he says, "My mother moved into the living room and my father moved me into his bed. And I stayed there for five years." This honesty about incest is especially rare in a documentary ostensibly about marriage, that same institution that sheltered the violence of John's father, a connection that *Truths and Trans-formations* doesn't elaborate upon, but it's certainly there for us to absorb. Ballard continues by telling us that when he was 15 his father took him aside and said if he ever did anything to "embarrass the family" he would kill him (um, who was embarrassing the family?)—a threat that Ballard lived in fear of for decades afterwards. He also reveals that for years as a kid he couldn't eat any white food, anything that reminded him of (his father's) semen. This graphic detail of surviving abuse is something so rare in the public incest narrative, and it's especially intimate and dangerous coming from someone now 70 years old.

Kathryn then reveals that she's been disowned by both of her parents—even her mother, who sheltered the neighborhood kids rejected by their parents, has now taken down all pictures of Kathryn and torn up Kathryn's contact information. Kathryn breaks down while relating this story, and temporarily can go no further. Later, she talks about working with adolescents and children as a therapist, but realizing that she needed to work with adults if she wanted to change anything because at the end of the day the kids still have to go home.

Then there's a moment where I talk about how surviving incest enabled me to dissect everything, and how making my living as a whore for 12 years forced me to negotiate the perilous intersections of sex, money, intimacy, and love in so many complicated and dangerous ways, while also learning how to articulate my desires and boundaries. Somehow this section comes while I'm walking outside in a lovely outfit of purple, mauve and pink, out into the neighborhood where the neon lights of the porn shop provide a surprisingly glamorous illumination. Watching this section, I'm wondering if I'm supposed to be working the street—I mean, if that's what it looks like I'm doing, since I don't appear to have an agenda except perhaps to add a different locale to the footage. But back to this theme of familial abuse—my own and John Ballard's histories of surviving incest/sexual abuse (experiences 35 years apart yet carrying certain resonances), Kathryn's struggle with being disowned, Denise's homophobic father—the honesty and variety of opinions/stories around this violence is perhaps the strongest elements of *Truths and Transformations*.

Around here is where we get another glimpse of the conflicted straight couple. The guy is talking about how marriage is a contract, how he has "an intense amount of power over what happens to her body," and the woman delivers quite the aside: "yeah, cat food." Then I'm talking about wanting to create a chosen family to replace the horrible one given me at birth, and how the tragedy of assimilation is the desire to belong to a horrible world, unchanged, instead of challenging the violence and trying to create something else. The Texas florist has quite a bit to say in this area as well, suggesting that the argument over gay marriage is masking a war that's going on (yes, someone said it!), and declaring, "I don't like playing into that sort of normal, heterosexual behavior." Then I say, "We're not talking about this consensual SM relationship, we're talking about this institution that's the foundation of anti-queer, anti-women, anti-child violence." And then, "Gay marriage is great for business, it's great for consumerism, it's great for capitalism—all it does is prop up those systems which are oppressing everyone and getting away with it." And later, "People's dreams have gotten so minimal."

Okay, I realize I'm quoting myself at length here. But I'll admit that I'm impressed that, even after editing maybe four hours of footage into...I don't know...probably five or 10 minutes total...Caren and Paula do still manage to convey my politics in a confrontational and compelling way and, well, of course I love that. My narrative is definitely simplified in ways that make it perhaps more comprehensible (and sometimes incorrect, such as a section where I'm talking about creating my own identity when I was 12 or 13, but it seems like I'm talking about when I first moved to San Francisco when I was 19), but nonetheless I get to voice complicated opinions with my signature flair.

I realize I'm omitting much commentary on the lengthiest section of the movie—footage of preparations for the wedding, the ceremony, the party—this goes on forever, from the clinking of silver wine glasses to the matching white dresses to the string trio (a childhood dream of Kathryn's) to Denise's drunk and stumbling father to the person officiating the ceremony who doesn't want to say the word "marriage" ("it's illegal") to the gorgeous flowers to the Texas sun to the elegant house with sophisticated art work where it all takes place to Kathryn's surrogate parents (where did they come from?) to Denise declaring "God made me this way."

Yes, this goes on and on and on. I can only imagine how many thousands of dollars this whole ceremony cost—I won't pretend that it leaves me without emotion, but mostly that emotion is sadness—I end up wanting Denise and Kathryn to experience their love for one another, assuming that this is love and not some misdirected fantasy (not that we all don't have misdirected fantasies), but what they want is this wasteful, heteronormative spectacle and I'm struck by the way that structural homophobia leaves so many queers longing for exactly what leaves us with such longing in the first place.

The hairstylist has a great line. He tells us it's how he instructs his brides: "When you're walking down the aisle, toss a coin, because heads you'll be together in three years and tails you won't—so just have fun at the party." Unfortunately, this line is not delivered at the ceremony, just to Caren and Paula and now to us in the audience.

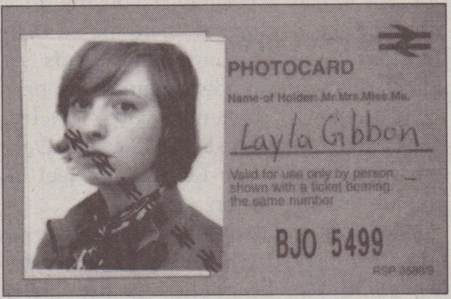
I will say that I enjoy these anecdotal asides. As Kathryn and Denise are saying "I do" (literally), I'm saying, "I don't think anyone has the right to marry—marriage has gotta go," then elaborating that there are other ways of living with and loving and lusting for one another that queers have created for generations, and finally, something about how gay assimilationists and the

Christian right serve each other's struggles—the Christian right is funded by fears of gay assimilationists, and gay assimilationists are funded by fears of the Christian right, and in some ways they have similar agendas. I talk about how gay marriage proponents get on TV and say to Christian fundamentalists, "I want what you want...I want marriage, I want a nice house in the suburbs—I am not a threat to you..." Then, my final line: "And that is horrifying." The hairstylist talks about how one of the beautiful things about being queer is "how we find our own families," and Denise's father is drunkenly saying, "I don't approve of her lifestyle…I don't want to lose her." One of the guests at the marriage is saying, "this is real love," I guess because there are flower girls and photo CDs.

So here's what I'm left with—I would never make this movie. I think gay marriage proponents have plenty of access to the media, and I wouldn't want to offer them more promo. The movie barely addresses race or class privilege (although the grand spectacle of the marriage certainly gives the viewer plenty to think about). This movie is totally conflicted in so many ways—so much lavish attention to the marriage, and then this nutcase from San Francisco (that's me) telling us it's wrong! A lesbian comedian telling Jewish mother jokes, and a 70-year-old gay man talking about alcoholism. Oh, and the straight couple—they should have their own movie—just the twitches that the woman makes while her husband says all these contradictory things about contracts and government and his own potential homophobia—watching them is pure documentary genius, let the camera roll and see what unfolds.

In some ways, maybe that's what this whole movie is doing. Sure, it's a talking-heads documentary, and a talking-heads documentary almost always seems too long, but there is also some beautiful surprising footage, like early on when Denise is riding a fake steer with genuine rodeo brutality in the background, then later that hooker on her balcony (me again) talking about the violence of gentrification, and oh the way the outdoor light shines on those lesbian brides as the string trio delivers such sophisticated sounds! What I'm saying is that yes, this movie is flawed, and I can only see it through my own flawed and fiercely opinionated lens—I don't have any idea, for example, what the audience in Texas thought, except that Caren told me the discussion went on for longer than the running time of the movie, and perhaps that's an indication that it's a success, I mean that more people should see it and gasp a little and wring their hands and sigh in confusion or exasperation or excitement and argue and maybe learn something. I know I did.

Check out my new anthology, *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity*, and tell me what you think! You can also check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns (and soon it will be updated to the present!). Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102




**Love is a Kick and a Bullmarket**

I worked at Rough Trade Records really briefly when I was about 15 or 14, the one in Covent Garden which I think is closing down now because they put up the rent. (Actually I just found out they are moving out to the East End. The one in Talbot Road will always be there I think; if you are ever in London definitely go check it out. The wall of punk 7"s is pretty amazing.)

Covent Garden used to be really seedy. I think the Sex Pistols had a squat there even, it was an old flower market that relocated and left a barren mass of squats and dilapidated buildings, then of course, artistically minded business people opened up stores there. And twenty or thirty years later it's an outdoor mall, pretty much, with the same stores that exist on streets in every town in every place in the western world. There's no room for Rough Trade Records anymore, I guess. I wonder what they are going to do with the space? Turn it into a boutique? Another rare sneaker store? I think about hanging out with the Huggy Bear girls and watching bands play, going and buying Unwound 45s and fanzines from the Slampt Underground. I saw so many bands in that basement—the Beastie Boys played there once, Blood Sausage, Free Kitten. Pavement, I think? I even skipped school to see Courtney Love do an acoustic set there, which boggles the mind at this point but it was before I was into punk, so…

I wonder if Slam City Skates are moving too. I used to get all my skateboards from there, in the time of small wheels, Plan B videos, and huge pants that could house five at least in each leg.

I was given a bunch of Dischord tapes by an old punk when I worked at Rough Trade—the Rites of Spring one, the Minor Threat one—and I listened to them until they warped. The pictures on the spine of the Rites of Spring tape made me feel so nostalgic for something I knew nothing about. Images of them climbing trees in wintertime, maybe after Revolution Summer?

Well, punk was nostalgia then too. Everything I remember from the *Banned in DC* book about Rev Summer was about trying to recreate something lost, the end of childhood frenzy, lost teenage freedoms and the need to make something else other than cynical write-offs claiming that things would never be as good again. I remember distinctly looking at the photos and wanting something I couldn't explain, some other existence, some other world that was only available to me when walking along listening to *End on End* on my walkman. In another place, in another time.

I am writing this whilst sitting in my room listening to the Hul LP. I have not hung out with anyone for a little while. Just picked a zit, ate some ice cream, (for future zit upkeep) thought about how I do not like anything Paul Weller has done after the Jam broke up and also thought about a conversation I had with Golnar today about punk and the glass ceiling politics of the eternal dude circle (which in itself is an eternal conversation! From the Conflict (US) interview in the May *MRR* through to Riot Grrrl and xChicksupfrontposX...to this afternoon on a lunch break phone call).

I was reading one of my favorite zines from my '90s emo sXe pos library (the ones that didn't get recycled). It had a great Sam McPheeter's interview complete with bloody-nose pin-up and a rad piece about how homoerotic pits are at sXe shows. Can you even imagine some sXe scenester now having the balls to talk about that? I think they would rather dress up like Agnostic Front and watch *Boston Beatdown*, just do the jock part without the whole complicated questioning-societal-values part.

It made me randomly google the aforementioned sXe zinester to find out what the dude was doing now, and of course he is a graphic designer that does advertisements for companies like Jeep. His web pagestill references his zine name. I can't imagine the transition from writing about the Earth Liberation Front and being queer and sXe to making adverts for companies that are directly responsible for destroying the earth. But I guess this has turned into yet another column about growing old and selling out, and how things I still think are important

were just youthful indiscretions to most of my generation. I feel like I should be able to just get over this stuff and just get into Death Cab for Cutie and buying 300-dollar dresses at Anthropologie or whatever it is punk girls do when they grow out of it. It just occupies my brain too much. Everything: the fact that it all makes me feel so melancholic, the fact that it really is just a phase for most, the fact that I still feel strongly about shows and bands and community and the underground and yet also feel really alienated from most punks. It's confusing and boring and endless.

I went to a great show at Gilman last week: Government Warning, Wasted Time, and Look Back and Laugh. Brian and Tobia set up a BBQ outside, a racist skinhead got knocked out with one punch by a weird time-traveling quantum-leap crusty/bathing ape druid on a mission, and Scott informed me that music is much better now than it was in the '90s and told me a story about Brandon from Government Warning busting in on some sorority girl's party the night before. He started performing a strip tease that all the party girls were into and assumed was part of the evening's entertainment until dudes from Warkrime showed up.

Wasted Time were fucking incredible, like *Pick Your King* through the Ginn blender, so much better than the 7", Government Warning were also phenomenal—I can't believe how great they are live. And then to top it off, Look Back and Laugh killed it. Made all the non-sXe record collectors happy with a Youth of Today cover, made me happy because they totally brought it. I would have gotten crucial but I am too old for that type of thing, plus without Golnar's presence it's hard to focus the cruciality needed.

It was such a great show, three incredible bands. It was funny because the entire teenage thrash scene left as soon as Government Warning finished, missing LBAL to go back to their million-dollar Berkeley Hills homes—for a hug from mommy? It has been pointed out that LBAL are mostly in my age group (that is to say agreeably matured, like a fine wine or whatever the sXe version of that metaphor would be) and the kids are mostly interested in seeing musical acts from their own generation rather than aging wizened cronies from mine, I guess.

It's just bizarre to me, coming from a scene where I would go see Huggy Bear play a Camden bar, or DDI play a Brixton squat. I was so psyched on discovering the underground and punk, and DIY and hardcore, I would go see Battalion of Saints *and* Sensefield *and* Bikini Kill irrespective of how close the members of the bands were to the realms of the ancients. I guess me and my friends were always the one group of teenagers at most shows, so maybe the median age for being into punk when I was growing up in London was more college-age than it is here. I remember thinking the aforementioned girls from Huggy Bear were *really old* because they were like 24 or something. Also Carl Hard-Cordova told me a story about going to see Samuel or Junction and thinking the singer was as old as a tree because she was like 28 or something. So maybe age does play a part in your perceptions of music, especially if you live in an area like the Bay, where there are so many different types of shows and bands and scenes that you can spend your entire privileged teenage existence only watching bands that sound exactly like the Decry *Suburban Death Camp* LP and not feel like you are missing out on anything.

Also, Carl pointed out to me that my dismissal of Fucked Up in the column before last could also be applied to my current dream team Sex Vid. This may be true, but Sex Vid's music makes me want to become a fuckin' alchemist, or you know, destroy society, or start a new band or something, in a way that Fucked Up never has. I feel like Sex Vid is perfect burned-down basement music—which is to say the best kind of music—whereas Fucked Up somehow exists in another space in my mind—it seems more professional and normal and palatable. But Sex Vid is about to put out a 12" which will be a new test, because the 7" is the perfect format, so maybe their run of greatness will be crushed by the new and different format. I feel like the tape and the 7" are the way and truth. Who knows? Not me!

Anyways, off the pigs, and layla.gibbon@gmail.com if you wanna correspond/wanna send me Neos bootlegs.

Life Without Buildings LP and Live CD.
*The New Hope* comp of weird old Ohio bands from the early-'80s. Check out maximumrocknroll.com/radio (the 9/1/07 show) for sounds.
Ian Svenonius interview in the new ANP quarterly.
Fugazi's *In On The Killtaker* and the Glen E. Friedman Fugazi book.
The introduction of the term "freemo" into my life. It refers to the noise/art school thing—you know, post-Lightning Bolt/Fort Thunder fanboy music, lots of contact mics, aggressive floor rolling, and gaffer tape and pedals. And adds to my theory that basically this scene is full of the people that would have been in roll-on-the-floor emo bands in the '90s.
Homostupids, still.
King Tubby Presents *Roots of Dub* LP.
Joan Didion. For some reason I can't find a copy of *Play as it Lays*, but I am kind of obsessed with her right now...
Coffee in the morning.
The Brat 10" and the Wolf and the Lamb. It's almost too cheesy but it is just so transcendent and great.

At university I studied History. Common in that world is the process of revisionism. As time goes on people with power, influence or an axe to grind get to rewrite history to showcase their role and denigrate others roles in past events. We often hear versions of the phrase "the victors get to write the history" which casts defeated causes, nations, or movements in a negative light and as somehow unworthy vis a vis those that triumph. This "historical darwinism" seems especially popular to Americans with the sports-centered "winner take all" nature of the culture. Often the truth is much different. Some of the most noble and righteous causes are those that go down in defeat in the face of repression. And history is full of good ideas and honorable people who refused to submit and went to the guillotine or the noose. In recent years there has been a lot of historical revisionism regarding the early '80s punk and hardcore scenes, and I'd like to look at a few examples.

I think one of the best treatments of early '80s hardcore is the book *Fucked Up and Photo-copied*. Said book does not attempt to analyse, or evaluate '80s hardcore, it just presents original documents, punk flyers, with a few reminisces from people who were around in the scene. On the other end there are books like *American Hardcore* which present a more linear and biased viewpoint while attempting broad coverage. Over time, as many people drifted away from the early hardcore scene, certain members who cared got to stick around and write its story. Most people who played in bands or booked shows in the early '80s eventually got jobs, started families and drifted away. Others died or went to prison. Some went on to careers in the music business and a handful became professional musicians or entertainers. The end result is that very few people (except underground zines like *MRR*,

*CLENCH* or *Game of the Arseholes*) are tracking down the guy "who used to play guitar in that influential band until his girlfriend got pregnant and he had to quit" and instead they seek out the grandstanders and soapboxers who are just a phone call away. As a result, every music documentary about the 20th century and especially about punk, is going to feature copious screen time from someone like Henry Rollins. This ensures that the version of events in the '80s you hear most often is that of someone like Rollins, and conflicting viewpoints and versions of events recede further into the background with each retelling of the story. We get to hear a version of events told from the point of view of the winners, the survivors, the lifers. But the early hardcore scene was full of truly brilliant and creative people who were attracted to this sudden explosion of creative energy, and then drifted away quickly when the fire started to flicker. Many people were driven away by the violence and stupidity that entered the scene with the skinhead movement, the crossover era and the rise of militant straight edge. Others were alienated by the commercialism and heavy metal influence of the mid-1980s. We rarely hear the version of events by these people. Instead we hear that of those who made peace with the changes in hardcore and adapted to the violence and commercialism rather than those who were repelled by it. It's taken for granted that each new wave or musical or artistic ferment will have a group of trailblazers, a surge of popularity, and then a wave of imitators and bandwagon jumpers. It's typically the trailblazers who are the first casualties of the success or popularity of the new movement as they always saw themselves as outsiders or rebels. It's the second wave, the bandwagon jumpers, who are jobbers ready to adapt to whatever market forces are at play to make the music marketable and commerically appealing. Thus in many movements it's the second wave who go on to long careers in the music business while the true originators wind up broke and forgotten.

Another important factor to keep in mind is the exponential growth of a fan base as records are kept in print, or not kept in print for generations of new fans. Bands that were on a sort of "level playing field" in 1981 have now had 25 years of record sales (or NOT) to build their reputation. Therefore, bands who signed to or started record labels and got distribution deals early and kept those ties strong, are all now household names, but bands who pressed 500 7"s and broke up have faded with their memory kept alive only by collectors and die hard fans. Over the years the bands that decided to make a career in music and got tied to the contractual obligation to tour and release a record every year, stayed way past their prime, but grew in popularity with each new generation of fans. Good examples of this would be Bad Religion and the Circle Jerks. Meanwhile some of the greatest bands broke up and saw their releases go out of print and their cult was kept alive only by a handful of tape traders and collectors. Good examples here would be Koro, Urban Waste or Deep Wound.

Another factor to keep in mind is the marketing, whether of a commercial or DIY nature, that accompanied the rise and success of these bands. Some bands who signed early on to bigger more professional labels or had distribution deals through such labels, were to benefit greatly from even a meager amount of promotion to radio and press. In a time when a new movement is starting, growing and spreading quickly, the media likes to identify a handful of cooperative and archetypical bands to identify with that movement. I can't imagine how beneficial it would be to a band to be instantly identified with a genre of music in the mind of the media, and hence the public who are not dialed into the inner workings of said scene. On the opposite side of this, on the underground there were bands who had advocates among the respected members of the scene. Those bands had little or no commerical promotion, but got "name-dropped in *MRR*" enough times that people checked them out. Also, being, or not being on some of the seminal compilation records of the '80s seems to have had a big impact on name recognition and the historical memory of many bands. The upside of this is that less-known and not-well-"packaged" bands had champions from people like Pushead, Ruth or Tim in these pages and got songs on compilations like *PEACE*, or *Welcome to 1984* that became classic snapshots of their era. We all benefitted from this DIY marketing because those guys had good taste and championed solid and dedicated bands at the expense of bands with big label backing. Another version of this kind of "scenester advocacy" is a popular band citing or covering another band as an influence. The textbook example of this would be Metallica's promotion of the Misfits. Anyone who was around in the early-'80s remembers the Misfits were not terribly popular, often even treated as kind of a joke band for their horror schtick. But in the late-'80s their popularity boomed with the advocacy of Metallica. In this manner a band that was not exactly in the forefront of the early-'80s hardcore scene (though admittedly unique in their sound/vibe) has been rewritten into history as being at the centre. If you asked someone vaguely familiar with '80s hardcore to name top bands of the that era they would probably say Black Flag, Dead Kennedys, Misfits, Minor Threat. If you asked that same question to someone who was around back in the day, they would have almost certainly cited DOA or Seven Seconds instead of the Misfits in that pantheon or hardcore past. In these pages in an early scumpit article citing what was "hot" with collectors the following was stated "any band that Metallica or Youth of Today wear the T-shirts of". This coupled with good marketing of reissues by savvy labels puts SSD and DYS at the centre of Boston hardcore in the '80s at the expense of Seige or the Proletariat. I'm fond of all those bands, but if you look at the press, you rarely see any mention made or interviewss with ex-members of Proletariat or Seige, but members of DYS and SSD are still actively promoting their careers (Dave Smalley-conservative punk-har har)

As the early-'80s hardcore scene died out new musical forces in punk came to the surface in the late-'80s and early-'90s. For most lifers this was the lowest point of hardcore punk. Interestingly, this period was one where a handful of die hard taper traders and record collectors enforced a rigid meritocratic weeding of the corpus of the '80s hardcore scenes output. In that era, when white-hat-mosh and bubblegum pop punk was kind, you would have been hard pressed to find anyone at a show who had heard of Urban Waste or Gauze. Now you can go to a hardcore show and *MOST* people are wearing Urban Waste or Gauze t-shirts. Meanwhile, bands that were very pouplar in the '80s such as DOA, UK Subs or Seven Seconds are hardly taken seriously. Record collectors, guaridans of good taste that they are, preserved and then popularized many of the cult and underground bands that had been glossed over in the '80s. Tape trading, fan driven bootleg shirts and records, and just plain enthusiasm on the part of maybe 1000-2000 collectors and traders worldwide who kept the flame burning during the dark years has served to revive interest in many forgotten bands in the last 10 years. The internet of course accelerated this process, to the point where many bands that were quite popular in the '80s are almost forgotten, but bands with one 7" that faded fast are household. I'd venture to say you could go to a DIY hardcdore show today and find more people who know Deep Wound or Koro than Youth Brigade or DOA songs.

Another very interesting case study is Skrewdriver. In the early '80s only a handful of Skinheads cared about Skrewdriver. As the skinhead movement grew and its violence attracted many alienated young males, bands associated with it also grew in popu-

larity. These bands frequently were also pretty easily co-opted by the music business the result being that the influence of skinhead bands and culture in the early-'80s is probably far over-exaggerated. Likewise, the role of these elements in killing off the best parts of hardcore punk in the mid-to-late-'80s is probably under-documented (except by a few bitter old sceneseters who remember that era) since the skinheads were largely successful. A whole new DIY hardcore scene had to be reconstructed in the early-'90s separate from these influences. Ironically, many of those who propelled this scene were the same record collectors and and lifers who had chosen *NOT* to buy into the music industry version of hardcore punk which resulted in a somewhat different re interpretation of '80s hardcore values into the present. Skinheads and violence made great copy, media types then and how have flocked to sensationalize this group while something like Better Youth Organization or Punk Percussion Protests are easily written out of history. Skrewdriver and other racist bands have powerful backers in the nazi movement. It's well known that many of the white power distributors are run, at a loss, by larger nazi organizations simply as a recruiting and propaganda tool. The nazi groups use the appeal of violence and machismo that attracted alienated young men from the bottom third of the IQ pool as a recruiting tool. But another powerful marketing tactic is to promote their music and culture as somehow forbidden and rebellious "this is the music *THEY* don't want you to hear" is a common theme. This mystique of the forbidden seems to have worked very well in Skrewdriver's favor over the years. In the '80s wearing a Skrewdriver shirt or playing a Skrewdriver song at a gig would result in a flood of letters to *MRR*, show boycotts and probably a bit of violent confrontation. Now when a band plays a Skrewdriver song at a gig, everyone rushes to the front to sing along. Somewhere along the line bands like Menace, Killjoys, Users, and other great UK punk from the early-'80s got sidelined and Skrewdriver got rewritten into the center of the UK punk scene. Record stores used to be boycotted for selling Skrewdriver records, and many actually sold the records discretely "behind the counter" to avoid protests from the punx. Now, Skrewdriver records are one of the hotter items on the internet. Indeed, the Ian Stuart estate is said to have grown quite weatlhly from licensing Skrewdriver merchandise to the extent of being able to hire lawyers to track down bootleggers around the world and protect their brand. The risque and forbidden nature of Skrewdriver was of course undermined by the accessibility of the internet, but this marketing has gone a long way to elevate this rather marginal group in the current scheme.

My point here, is that history, is rarely linear and made up of a series of events dominated by one person. Think of it as a web rather than a straight line. Many events, trends and personalities are at work, they cross and interweave making a complex picture. As time passes this web is deconstructed by participants and observers and hammered into a straight line narrative that puts themselves or their constituents at the centre of the picture. Indeed, if you carefully read the text above you can see how I managed to place record collectors at the center of the revival of hardcore in the mid/late 1990s. Thus writing myself and my friends into the center of the narrative at the expense of the Warped Tour, which was on the surface the dominant face of punk in that period. If you want a fairly unbiased picture of hardcore in the 1980s I would recommend skipping the secondary sources or reading them only with a greatly critical and open mind. Go instead to the primary sources, *MRR* issues 1-20 probably have more information about the early hardcore scene than all the books and movies made about this era together. But even *MRR* had some notable bias, therefore don't accept the *MRR* verions but read *Flipside, Ripper, Leading Edge, XXX, Forced Exposure,* and other zines for a more balanced point of view. Likewise, pay more attention to what band members said in interviews *THEN* as opposed to *NOW* about what they were doing in the '80s. And lastly, when there is a talking head, question their version of events from where they were and where they wound up.

According to MC Chris, Curb Your Enthusiasm is coming out with a new season. For those of you who haven't seen this HBO show, it's basically the same as Seinfeld without the New York City aspect. Since LA has no real culture of its own, you're forced into the life of Larry David, writer and creator of both shows. Basically he's a dick, and since he's rich and famous, he sort of gets away with it; well to him he gets away with it. I've always liked this show because it mimics about 75% of everyone having a wedding or a bar mitzvah that I have to deal with on a daily basis. It's funny because in the show, Larry seems to always get caught up in some situation where he looks like a total bigot. And when I make a statement where Larry acts like people spending thousands upon thousands of dollars on some stupid bar mitzvah party, it can easily be interpreted that I dislike Jews, or something like that. Of course while I love pointing out behavior that as an unbiased observer of culture, as uniquely Jewish or Greek or Italian or White or Black or Moronic, I can't really feel the hate behind it. If folks didn't keep these stereotypes alive, everyone wouldn't make jokes about it. It's like the Serbians that own the building I live in, I'm sure they are amazing people and love their children and take their grandma to church every Sunday, or to Mosque on Friday etc, but they still look at me with stone cold stares like they wish I was dead. All I can do is make fun of them behind their backs and hope they don't stab me if I forget to recycle something. It's not racism. It's not the same as Jerry Lewis calling someone a faggot on the telethon, but frankly a couple of years ago he called someone a retard on the telethon, no one made a stink about that one because it was the year he looked like a blimp because of whatever weird medical problems he had.

On this note, people always ask me, "Hey Bill, you've been saying things that piss people off for so many years, has anyone ever tried to beat you up?" I would always say, "I don't think so, I don't really think any of the wisecracks and pranks I've pulled were really worthy of violence." I was saying this once to someone, and that dude Charles Maggio, who was the singer of Rorshach and dude who does Gern Blandsten Records was like, "Wait a minute Bill, I remember that one time up in Connecticut…" Ok, so let me start at the beginning of this story, back when I had only been editing wedding videos for three of four years.

It was my cousin Mike's first birthday. My aunt lived in a part of the Bronx called Edgewater. It's a close community. I don't mean that people are extra friendly there or anything, it's just that the houses are small and all close together. It's sort of in-between a beach bungalow neighborhood and a trailer park. My cousin was one of those kids constantly blabbing and saying funny things to get attention; sort of funny since now he's kind of the quiet type.

After we blew out the candles on the cake, Mike was sitting on the floor next to a cute little one-year-old African American girl. My Uncle pulled out the camcorder, and everyone starts saying, "Michael, kiss the baby, Mikey, kiss the baby." So little smi-

ley Mikey, pretty new to this kissing thing, grabs hold of the girls head, and plants his lips firmly on her cheek. In the next instant we hear a scream as Mikey bites down and takes a chunk out of the poor kids face. Blood squirting everywhere. It was pretty disturbing.

At the time, I had just started college, and wasn't very happy with my choice of Pace University. Anyhow, every day I'd be changing classes and cutting through the cafeteria and this guy Kevin who sometimes bounced at CBGB was always sitting there eating lunch. I would say "What's up," him being the only person within a 20-mile radius that I had anything in common with. One day I stopped and asked why he was always sitting in the cafeteria and he was like, "I'm dating this girl here, waiting for her to get out of class." That was pretty much all I knew of the dude. Let me remind you not everyone in the NYHC scene in the late-eighties was nice and positive and ready to sing along with Gorilla Biscuits. As many of you know, it had a reputation of being pretty violent. Not the sort of "I got a bump on my head because I tripped while I was stage diving." More like, "I spent a week in the hospital getting my jaw rebuilt after some dude accused me of looking at his girlfriend and his gang all slammed my face into a dumpster for 20 minutes instead of watching the band."

At the time I did a zine, I don't know why exactly, it probably had something to do with the fact that the two black skinheads I was trying to start a band with couldn't find anyone to play drums and one of them didn't really own a guitar, and this millionaire's kid offered to print it for free if I'd put his name in the credits. Anyhow, there wasn't really anything special about the zine. It had band interviews and reviews and crap like that. It caused some level of controversy probably just because I suppose this is part of the personality I like to put on paper. I've always loathed anyone who likes to talk up everything like its great. Although when some dipshit in a metalcore band may decide to put you on the south end of the CBGB dumpster, talking up everything like it was great would have been a smart move. I was pretty careful to try and not "shit where I eat," so to speak. So while I admit I wasn't readily expressing my feelings about certain bands that liked to surround themselves with murderous graffiti crews, I always felt the suburbs were fair game for me to goof on.

I was at a show on Long Island; I believe it was at The Right Track Inn—good name for a place, not so many good shows there. Anyhow, as you could imagine, it was a weekend afternoon show and it was three or four bands from New York City proper, I'll say Burn, Supertouch, SFA, and probably another three or four bands from outside of NYC. No one really remembers any of these bands unless you still live in the suburbs and have nothing else to hold on to, and I for sure can't remember them. Anyhow, one of these bands was from Connecticut.

Ok, you also have to remember that in 1989, Hip Hop fashion was not quite part of the white community as it was years afterward. This was around the time NWA was just getting popular and figure this was a year or two before the 1992 riots. A few months before the Crown Heights riots, it was pretty much a 20 year low point of race relations in New York if not for most other cities in America. New York had its first black mayor, and while this was a swell thought, it would have better if he didn't suck. While the Beastie Boys were pretty well liked, this was before Vanilla Ice and MC Hammer, so basically what I'm saying is that kids going to punk shows weren't doing the whole sideways baseball hat and parachute pants thing. Anyhow, this band from CT, let's call them Withheld, gets on stage and the singer is doing the whole mush-mouth sorta thing, he has the baseball hat sideways and his shorts and shirt and socks and sneakers are all red. Now this isn't to be cute, as far as being what someone a couple of years later would call a wigger, he was also a pretty terrible front man. No one could understand what he was saying, and whatever it was, wasn't really much of anything. So, to make things worse, Gavin the guitar player from the band Burn is sitting at the edge of the stage heckling him. "Hey Vanilla Fudge! You look so darn cute in that little outfit. Hey Vanilla Fudge, let me re-tie your laces for you." Thinking back on it, it must have been brutal for this kid. Gavin's not the dude you want fucking with you, be it serious or joking. He was the guy ya always felt like, "man, I'm glad he likes me, because if he didn't I'd have to move to a new city." I once saw him dive at a moving car that was racing to get away from him, he locked his arms around the drivers head while the dude crashed into 15 or so parked cars and sped down the street where Gavin finally let go, probably only to find him and beat him senseless days later.

So, when my zine came out with its page of show reviews, there's a brief mention of Withheld and their singer "Vanilla Fudge." I didn't really think much of it because 1. Who cares about bands from Connecticut, and 2. They probably wouldn't exist for another month or two being that terrible anyway.

So, I get a call from my aunt. She asks, "Is there any way you can erase the part where Mikey bites the girl's cheek off, without losing any of the other precious memories of his first birthday?" I told her it would be no problem. I brought the tape into work, and deciding to be creative I froze Mikey's face right before he took a bite and left the sound of screaming underneath the freeze frame. My aunt wasn't happy and this was replaced a week later with a black part. Wait, that sounds racist, it was replaced with a section of video that included no picture or sound. It didn't have, like, a rack of ribs and a dude breakdancing. Yes, always trying to keep it PC. It's *MRR* ya know. If you were wondering, of course I made a copy for myself before erasing it. So a day or two later my friend Mark tells me about a skinhead party in Yonkers. I seem to remember not being happy about going to this, but this was a time where shows were at an all time low. CBGB had just stopped doing weekly matinees after someone had been shot and killed outside one of them, and ABC No Rio had not started matinees up. Almost nothing else was going on all winter, so a skinhead party in Yonkers was better than nothing, which I still find a little hard to believe. Anyhow, the big dude from the cafeteria, Kevin, is there, this kid Rick, a 16-year-old Yonkers skinhead, and I dunno, a couple of punk/gothy girls, some hardcore skinhead types etc. So I decided to bring along the tape of Mikey and the cheek biting birthday. Needless to say, it was a big hit, they must have watched it 30 times and were all rolling all over the floor at the expense of wish-we-could-forget-moments of the Florio's. I think that Kevin guy even hugged me.

So here it is. The moment Charles was talking about. I'm standing in the parking lot of the Anthrax club in Connecticut. I drove up there all alone to see some hardcore show, it may have been after shooting someone's wedding and I changed out of my tux in time to catch the last two bands. I have a stack of zines I'm trying to peddle, and all of a sudden there's like 20 kids in hooded sweatshirts and Nike Airs surrounding me. See, at some point the kids in Long Island and Connecticut wanted to have their own creepy murderous graffiti crews and sort of tried to copy the NYC and Boston ones, though still not as scary. I quickly realize that Vanilla Fudge has gathered his minions and he comes up to me and in his odd superracial slur asks about why I called him Vanilla Fudge. "Yo, you don know ha I cum frum. Yo, you don know wha I am, wha the fuh do you get off callin me dat?" I'm trying to think of a reply that will somehow get me out of this. It's at this moment when Kevin (who happens to run with the scary people these kids are copying) comes out of nowhere wielding a large

pistol and Lou from Sick Of It All is hanging around his neck saying, "Kevin, don't kill them, they're not worth it." I have no idea why he decided to kill them, but at that moment, I can't say I had all that much sympathy. All these dudes suddenly forget they were going to teach me a lesson and start backing away hoping that first bullet doesn't hit them. They are about to start pleading their case with Kevin like I was feeling I was about to a second before and in that short silence, before they start begging for their lives, Kevin looks at me smiles and say. "Hey Bill! What's up!" I'd love to tell you that no one got hurt, but all I can remember is getting the hell out of there. As far as Kevin, he was always pretty nice to me, but I think he went to jail for a while for beating someone to near death with a cymbal stand while singing for his band Bulldoze. I wish him well. And Gavin, god bless him, openly swings both ways, great dude, and I'm still glad he likes me, and he can heckle me on stage anytime and I never feel I have to leave town.

The End

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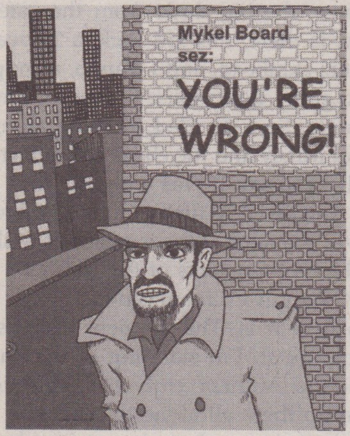



*old pond—*
*frogs jumping in*
*the sound of water*
—Basho (revised version)

You slowly insert your vaselined finger into your asshole. You push it around, massaging a bit. You twist the digit, lubricating 360 degrees. Then you squat over the crisco-greased butt plug. Five inches around at the widest point. Can you accommodate it? It'll be snug. Just right.

Its pointy end up, the flat side rests against the wood on the floor. You lower yourself on to it, feeling the tip pry open the resistant sphincter and slowly slip inside.

Ow! You're not going to…yes…ah, there it is. You feel like you've gotta take the world's heaviest beershit, but there it is. That hole plugged and ready to go.

You've already used a hoseclamp to chock off your few inches of manliness. Or, you've wadded an old sock into your girl-hole. Now, you can dress and continue the operation.

Underpants on, then jeans, t-shirt, socks, and shoes. You pull your earplugs out of the desk drawer and insert them in your ears. You rap on the desktop. You can still hear a faint thud, like a body falling from a building far in the distance.

The bandage will take care of that.

You take two fresh gauze pads and put them over your closed eyes. Then you wrap a bandage...like the ones they use in mummy movies…over the gauze. The same bandage further covers the earplugs.

Again you hit the desk. Nothing. Absolute silence.

Feeling around, your hands strike the cool leather of the ball gag. You feel from the buckle to the center. Picking it up, you open your mouth as wide as you can. It's not wide enough. You're afraid of knocking your teeth out. You lick the ball, getting it salivatorily greased enough to try again.

Now you open your mouth so wide you feel cracking on the side of your head. You push. Yes! The ball pops into your mouth. It holds down your tongue, making you gag. When the reflex stops, you buckle the device behind your head.

Touch, you can't block. You need to navigate. You've taken care of sight, sound, taste. You've closed all openings below the waist. You have to breathe, so you can't close your nose completely, but you can protect yourself from any odor that might invade from the local garbage or bakery.

First, you stuff some extra gauze into one nostril. Feeling your way around to the kitchen, you find the refrigerator. It's easy to open. Finding the vegetable bin is a little trickier. In your quest, you knock something over. Something warm and sticky drips against the back of your hand.

Further down. Bottom shelf. You recognize the onion by the thin loose skin. You peel the skin, until you reach the slightly wet juicy part in the center. Pressing your thumb against it, you allow the finger to soak up some juice. Then, you run your thumb under the open schnozhole. Your eyes tear beneath the bandages.

Closing the refrigerator door, you're ready to face the world.

Slowly, you feel your way to your apartment door. Go out. Navigate the hall with your hands against the walls. You come to the elevator, feel for the call button. Rest your hand against the closed door. You wait for it to open…for the elevator to carry you downstairs, to walk outside in the city air. Ready to face the city.

FLASH TO PRESENT: I'm in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Here on a book tour and haiku conference. I've been interested in haiku since I lived in Japan 20 years ago. That's when I learned that haiku is not the idiotic anything-that's-5-7-5 drivel that clogs the internet. Haiku in English has changed from a lame imitation of the Japanese. In some ways, it's more conservative, more Zen, than modern Japanese haiku. In other ways, it's more modern. One of greatnesses is the spirit of awareness. Knowing what's going on *right now*. Feeling the wood of the chair slats as it presses into your back. Being able to trace that fart as it slides up the right side of the large intestine, across the top—like toothpaste squeezed from a tube—down the left side, where the pressure pain comes in huge bubbles, until finally where it blasts out in a triumphal trumpet. The sound of flatulence.

One of the conference seminars is on a new translation of the famous Basho haiku that you would have learned in high school, if you weren't too busy listening to your iPod.

In the old translation, there was just one frog, probably a big ole bullfrog, that jumped into the water. Basho heard the frog and, to surprise his readers, talked about the sound of the water, rather than the croaking sound of the frog.

The Japanese language doesn't use plurals. The same word means *frog* and *frogs*. In the new translation there are lots of frogs. They're jumping in the water all the time, creating a more or less constant sound, like someone typing on an old fashioned typewriter.

The genius of the poem is that Basho noticed the water's sound in one moment of inspiration. The frogs were there all the time, splashing around, fucking, farting, jumping, doing whatever it is that frogs do in water. This is so common, so taken for granted, that nobody is even aware of it.

*Pow*! Basho has a great moment of awareness. He hears the water *because* of the frogs. In one instance, he celebrates his immediate awareness of what's always around him. This water, *now*.

If punkrock means *no future*, you can't get more punkrock than that.

The opening paragraphs of this column come to me while sitting on the subway. I'm reading the latest copy of *Viz*. I look up at the people sitting across from me. There they are. A row of dead people waiting their turn at the taxidermist. Sitting silently as their life fluids drain from their body and are replaced by embalming fluid, via the ears, through thin white wires.

At each stop, I hear the scratch of the opening doors. People shuffling in and out.

Snatches of banter, "...and her momma's gonna be pissed when she finds out..."

The people across from me don't hear it at all. They hear Kenny Loggins, or Destiny's Child or Buju Banton. They sit aurally cocooned. If you asked them, they probably couldn't tell you the race, gender, or age of the person rubbing their arm. They don't care. In an isolated city, these people—taken over, like by iPods of iBody Snatchers—isolate themselves further.

They've tried to wipe away their world. Cut out the real universe next to them. Not *deal* with the rest of humanity. Huddle in their opaque bubbles.

Am I better, nose buried in the latest *Viz*? Aren't I trying to shut out the world?

I don't think so. I can—and do—look up. I hear the fuss. I see the crotch of the woman in short shorts standing over me hoping I'll give her my seat. The pod people are aware of nothing. They're zombies, sleep walking in a self-contained world.

I don't block my perceptive input. I do, however, have a history of psychic iPodism.

I complained about the richness of my world. Horns honk the second a light turns green. Trashmen bang dumpsters at 3 a.m. Ambulance sirens, one after the other down Broadway. I complained! You know the way girls scream when they meet after a long absence? You know the way they hold their hands in front of their chests like squirrels sniffing for peanuts? You know the way they act like complete morons, shrieking at the top of their lungs at the most sensitive point on the human auditory spectrum? That used to bother me.

You know the way homos yell at each other on the street? Stand with their hands on their hips? Bat the word *bitch* back and forth like tennis players bat a tennis ball? The way they stand and scream on the sidewalk, at all hours of the night? The way they throw you a *What-are-you-looking-at-Mary* look, before they tell you what you're not good enough to do to them? I used to be annoyed at that.

You know the way freshmen college jocks drink one beer and suddenly feel drunk? You know how they immediately show their suppressed homosexuality, hug each other, sing their frat song at full off-key volume? Sometimes twist each other's nipples? You know how they shout some unintelligible sports chant or Greek letter drivel? Something that sounds like BUG-UBBA BUG-UBBA BUG-WANNA-BUG-BUG-BUG? There was a time I didn't like that.

Can you imagine? The richness of this input. The most chaotic punkish of the punk and I complain? The universe is playing itself for me, like water for Basho, and I'm annoyed? What's wrong with me?

The world is a chorale. Car alarms, screeching subway wheels, twirking pigeons, your grandmother's farts. The smell of old bums on the street. The sight of plastic bags blowing in the wind from light poles. They're all part of it. Each instrument is there, playing for me. The world's biggest concert is *the world*.

It hits me like a feminist-thrown brick. I smile. Throw my arms back like a diver just before he jumps. I scream at the top of my lungs, adding to the cheerful cacophony. *Yes! Yes! Yes!*

I run down Broadway. Down to Chinatown. To the fish market. I inhale the scent of the rotting entrails, thrown to the ground in the mass filet. I breathe the durian, the old-sock fragrance of the Thai stink-fruit.

I can't believe what I've been missing. Not missing, but experiencing as bad...as something to be stopped, shut out. All this! This great, loud, smelly world. What an idiot I've been for being annoyed. What an idiot you are for wanting to shut it out.

Am I saying that anyone who uses an iPod or a cell phone is a social cripple? Am I saying that wearing deodorant is like walking around with a butt plug up your ass? Am I saying that not enjoying a car alarm is like walking around with your head covered in bandages? Yes! That's exactly what I'm saying. More than that. Using an iPod on the subway, playing video games on the back of an airline seat, chatting on a cell phone while waiting on line at the bank...all these things are fascist. OK, Jeff Bale, they're not exactly fascist. But they *are* totalitarian.

You are trying to play god. You're not accepting the cinematic symphony that is the world. You want to control it. To bend it to your will. You want to rule over it like a tyrant. Eyes, ears, tongue, nose. You are the master of input. Fuck the world, you say. You want to control it all. To plug your holes. Stop yourself up. Control the input. Humanity and all that's outside shouldn't have a chance. And, oh yeah, you probably call yourself an anarchist.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com), blog viewer (mykelboard. blogspot.com), podcast listeners or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get a chance to comment directly to me on the content of this column]

*??Thanks dept:* I want to thank my pal Brian Cornforth for putting up with me, chauffeuring me around, and letting his dog, Frank Zappa, hump my leg and bite my ass. I was on a book tour in North Carolina just before I went to the haiku conference.

I also want to thank the guys at Inte-rnationalist Books in Chapel Hill. Great bookstore, great reading...I thought I lost the check they gave me...and complained. Turns out they paid me in cash. Sometimes I'm an idiot!

*??That's the way it is with everyone in the world dept:* Krzyfztof Wroblewski pounded on a woman's door from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. When the knocking stopped, the woman opened the door and Wroblewski stormed inside. He shoved her to the ground and grabbed her cell phone when she tried to call 911. According to *The New York Post*, "he believed that he and the woman were romantically involved, while she considered themselves merely acquaintances."

*??Small victories dept:* New York City has publicly apologized and paid $750 to each of eight artists who were banned by the parks department. The display was part of a Brooklyn College MFA program final. The city said the display was "not appropriate for families" and shut it down, damaging some of the artwork in the process.

Among the displays was an illustrated story that included a Dick Cheney blowjob. Supposedly, there was other sexual content. My question: if sexual content is not appropriate for families, how do families get there in the first place?

The rest of this month's endnotes all come from *Gay City News, August 23, 2007.*

*??Queers for Bush* dept: Ryan J. Davis posted a video on You Tube called "Gays for Giuliani." It's supposed to be a pro-Giuliani video thanking little Benito for "supporting civil unions," and being pro-gay in general.

Those whose IQ is larger than my dick have already figured out this is a genius attack ad. Created by lefty gays, they've aimed it at Republicans who wouldn't touch homos with a ten-foot dildo. They plan to show it on TV in the Southern States, where it'll hurt most. I give 'em 20 points.

*??But* I take 20 points away from the *Queer Justice League*. Somebody famous (me?) once said any time people talk about *justice* someone's gonna get hurt. I was right, of course.

This group is demonstrating against anti-gay reggae acts. Their bogeymen are Buju Banton and Bounty Killa. They want the pair banned from public performances and censored everywhere else. A local state senator is trying to help get the acts banned. Fortunately there's a voice of reason. Gay activist Bill Dobbs writes, *The effort to use the government to interfere with a message, however offensive, is despicable.*

Now, is Giuliani gonna have to hire Banton and Killa to boost his sagging conservative image?

*??Talk about irony dept:* A New York jury has

awarded $1.5 million to a cop and two co-cops. The cop was prohibited from becoming a Youth Liaison Officer because his superior thought he was gay. Two other cops came to his aid, and they were immediately moved off the fast-advancement track to desk jobs.

The city fought hard against the verdict, and is now appealing it. The city argues that none of the officers "suffered enough" to warrant so much money.

OK, that's not so weird. City governments pay lawyers to be assholes. But, on page seven of the same gay newspaper that ran the story, is a police recruitment ad, paid for by the city of New York. The ad features a picture of a female cop (presumably a lesbo) with the quote: *I can't think of another profession that would make me prouder—being a role model for children.* Yowsah!

*? If it says OUCH, spits, and deflates it's real dept:* In California, a plaintiff known only as Joy H. is suing her "husband" under California's community property law. That law says that legally married people own half of all of each other's property. In a divorce, that property is split.

The hitch is that Joy's husband is a woman and gay marriage is not legal in California. Joy claims that she didn't know the sex of her spouse. Though they often had sex, "he" used a dildo under the covers. Joy thought it was real.

The judge tossed out the case. I wonder if hubby has since tossed out the dildo.

*??Reuters knows who butters its bread dept:* A Reuters Hollywood reporter filed a story about Merv Griffin. Its title: *Merv Griffin Died a Closeted Homosexual*. When the story appeared, the title was changed to *Griffin Never Revealed the Man Behind the Curtain.* A number of content changes also suddenly appeared in the final publication.

No comment from Reuters.

I just *love* hypocrisy. Don't you? Don't you love it when people who preach so-called family values get caught with their pants down? Literally! This bit of whimsical smart-assedness concerns soon-to-be former (maybe) Idaho senator Larry Craig. Craig is one of those Republican legislators who has gone out of his way to deny gay and lesbian people basic civil rights. Let's take a look at the record. In 2006, he endorsed an anti-gay marriage amendment to the Idaho constitution and that passed, abolishing any sort of civil partnerships for same-sex partners. He supports a constitutional amendment that defines marriage as between a man and a woman. He opposed adding sexual orientation to the definition of hate crimes and legislation that would have prohibited job discrimination due to sexual orientation. He supported the "don't ask, don't tell" approach to homosexuality in the military—where, if a soldier is openly gay, he or she can be bounced out of the military. Incidentally, that great liberal Bill Clinton signed that legislation and it was a compromise. Clinton originally wanted the ban lifted.

So what happened exactly? Or allegedly happened? In June, Craig was in a men's room at the Minneapolis airport and got busted by a plainclothes cop and pled guilty to disorderly conduct charges. What apparently happened is this paragon of virtue was accused of trying to pick up the undercover cop for a rendezvous by using signals that indicate he wanted action. He allegedly peeked into the undercover cop's stall, then went into the adjoining stall and started tapping his foot and touching the foot of the cop with his foot—and so on. In any case, after this arrest, Craig pled guilty about six weeks later, in early August. This story didn't even hit the news until later in the month. Neither did the arrest in June, for that matter. And, as I'm writing this, Craig is thinking about staying on, instead of resigning, and looking to reverse his guilty plea. A story that keeps getting curiouser and curiouser.

OK, so let's give Craig the benefit of the doubt for the moment—cops do entrap people. They're not above lying. Craig didn't actually engage in any sexual acts in that men's room. The thing is Craig did plead guilty but also claims he wasn't trying to pick the cop up and adamantly denied he's gay, despite the fact that there have been rumors about Craig's homosexuality for some time. The *Idaho Statesman* had a recent story about those allegations that he's gay. It cited a 40-year-old man who claims he had oral sex with Craig around 2004 at Union Station in DC. The story also mentioned, *"One man, who was considering pledging with Craig's fraternity at the [University of Idaho] in 1967, said Craig took him to his room and made what the man said he took to be an invitation to sex. Responding to that allegation in May, Craig said, "I don't hit on any men."*

*Another man said that in November 1994 Craig "cruised" him at the REI store in Boise. The man, who is gay, told the Statesman that Craig stared at him in a sexually inviting way and followed him around REI for a half-hour. Said Craig: "Once again, I'm not gay, and I don't cruise, and I don't hit on men. I have no idea how he drew that conclusion. A smile? Here is one thing I do out in public: I make eye contact, I smile at people, they recognize me, they say, 'Oh, hi, Senator.' Or, 'Do I know you?'"* Curiouser and curiouser!

Craig also had to step down as presidential candidate Mitt Romney's Idaho state chairman. Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, has taken a hard turn to the right on social issues, including abortion and gay marriage, in an attempt to kowtow to the radical christian right. Craig's colleagues have worked to distance themselves from him and urged his resignation.

Here's another bit of hypocrisy. Another Republican senator, David Vitter from Louisiana, also got caught in some extra-marital shenanigans when his named turned up on the client list of the "DC Madam," Deborah Jeane Palfrey. Vitter apologized for his errant ways and played the God card. He stated, *"This was a very serious sin in my past for which I am, of course, completely responsible. Several years ago, I asked for and received forgiveness from God and my wife in confession and marriage counseling. Out of respect for my family, I will keep my discussion of the matter there—with God and them. But I certainly offer my deep and sincere apologies to all I have disappointed and let down in any way."* So Vitter admitted his so-called sinfulness but didn't resign from office. Maybe it's because his "sin" was heterosexual and Craig's was homosexual. The issue should be the hypocrisy of preaching one thing and saying the other, regardless of orientation. But it's turned into a gay issue. Perhaps Craig's sin is, not only did he try to pick up the undercover cop, but that he may be, denials to the contrary, a gay man.

By the way, a congressional colleague of Craig's from Idaho, Rep. Helen Chenoweth, also admitted to having not lived up to her family values bona-fides. Turns out she'd carried on a lengthy affair before being elected to Congress. She also talked to God, though, and said the big guy in the sky has forgiven her. Hey, everyone fucks up but she wasn't so forgiving over Bill Clinton's dalliances. In a 1998 campaign ad against her Democratic opponent Dan Williams, she tried to link him with Clinton and said, *"our founding fathers knew that political leaders' personal conduct must be held to the highest standards...President Clinton's behavior has severely damaged his ability to lead our nation, and the free world."* Even though she engaged in dubious personal conduct, Chenoweth still got re-elected.

Another hypocrite. What else is new? And here's an interesting twist to the story. As I write this, Craig has hired an attorney

named Billy Martin (not to be confused with the longtime New York Yankees manager—he's dead, anyway). Martin also represents Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick. Well, I doubt Vick will be playing with the Falcons anymore. Vick recently pled guilty to conspiracy to sponsor interstate dog fighting. He'll be sentenced later this fall and is likely looking at 12 to 18 months and has also been indefinitely suspended by the NFL. This guy is a real piece of work—he was involved in a dog fighting ring. He helped kill underperforming dogs—the methods used included drowning, strangulation and electrocution. Vick probably knew he was fucked and copped a plea. Then, much like Vitter and Craig, he also played the "God card," claiming he'd found *Jeeeeezus*. After entering his plea, Vick said, *"I'm upset with myself and, you know, through this situation I found Jesus and asked him for forgiveness and turned my life over to God… I think that's the right thing to do as of right now."*

It turns out that it wasn't the first time Vick had been touched by the spirit. An ESPN column by Gene Wojciechowski quoted Vick as saying, when he was drafted by the Falcons in 2001, *"I feel the Lord has blessed me by sending me to Atlanta."* Dan Reeves, the Falcons' coach at the time, said in a *Sports Illustrated* piece that Vick is *"a great football player, but he's an exceptional young man who I think will set this franchise up for a long time to come."* Oof…maybe you want to reconsider those words, Dan. In any case, OK, Vick has been blessed. How much of a christian is he if he engages in such barbaric actions? It was once said (by Samuel Johnson in 1775) that patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel. I think I'd amend it to say that about religion, as well. Get caught doing something? Time to dig Jesus' number out of the rolodex.

A few weeks ago, I was listening to one of the national sports radio shows—either ESPN Radio or Sporting News Radio—I forget which but the hosts were talking about the Vick case and his profession of faith. They discussed how Vick could be losing three or more years of the prime of his career—he's now 27—between the jail time and whatever suspension the league hands down. The NFL has a relatively new commissioner, Roger Goodell, who is already establishing himself as a stern disciplinarian, unwilling to put up with bad behavior of any sort. So I imagine any action he takes with Vick will be harsh. Goodell issued a statement about Vick that said the following: *"Your admitted conduct was not only illegal, but also cruel and reprehensible. Your team, the NFL, and NFL fans have all been hurt by your actions… Your plea agreement and the plea agreements of your co-defendants also demonstrate your significant involvement in illegal gambling. Even if you personally did not place bets, as you contend, your actions in funding the betting and your association with illegal gambling both violate the terms of your NFL Player Contract and expose you to corrupting influences in derogation of one of the most fundamental responsibilities of an NFL player."* I don't expect to see Vick in *any* NFL uniform for a long time, if ever again.

But these radio hosts mentioned how Muhammad Ali also lost three years during his athletic prime, from 1967-1970, from the age of 25 to 28. Ali refused military induction, which would have meant being shipped off to Vietnam. Ali received a five-year sentence, was stripped of his heavyweight title and had his passport revoked. He never served a day and his conviction was overturned in 1971.

Michael Vick should never be mentioned in the same breath as Muhammad Ali. In all fairness, the hosts weren't comparing the two men, just noting that each athlete lost/would lose those peak years. Vick will be doing his time for a reprehensible act. Ali stood up and refused to take part in an immoral war that cost the lives of over 58,000 US servicemen, not to mention the countless casualties suffered by the Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians. As Ali said in 1966, *"I ain't got no quarrel with the VietCong... No VietCong ever called me nigger."* He also said, *"No, I am not going 10,000 miles to help murder kill and burn other people to simply help continue the domination of white slavemasters over dark people the world over. This is the day and age when such evil injustice must come to an end."*

Still, Ali was no choirboy, either. He's a devout Muslim but had his own marital infidelities. So I guess there's some hypocrisy there, as well. And while I have a good deal of respect for Ali and feel badly about his battle with debilitating Parkinson's disease, it just proves that relying on these celebrities to be role models is never a good idea.

I suppose I should talk to my sister and brother-in-law about having my nephew Koby not wear his Michael Vick football jersey anymore. Maybe his Tom Brady, New England Patriots jersey would be better. Oh, wait a sec—Brady's ex-girlfriend, Bridget Moynahan, just gave birth to their "out of wedlock" baby and that also ticked off some of the moralistic family values types. You just can't win…

**MUSIC REVIEWS:**

**CLUSTERFUCK-How The West Was Won (Vital Center, LP)**

Rip-roarin' hardcore punk with a rowdy spirit. Short songs that seamlessly blend into each other without missing a beat. It's not just simple thrash, either—busy bass and guitar lines and stop-on-a-dime tightness. Donn has a memorable voice in much the same way Jello does. A higher pitched snotty yelp-croon that drips with sarcasm. That sarcasm is coupled with a sense of anger, a sense of numbness as mentioned on "I'm Fine, Thank You," followed by "OK, Now I'm Unhappy," expanding the numbness into hopelessness. The notes on the inner sleeve call it an "exercise in American protest music." Even with those feelings, the songs are imbued with an irresistible liveliness. Only 300 of these suckers so you best not sit still. (38 Wall St., Valhalla, NY 10595, www.myspace.com/clusterfuckcthc)

**CULT RITUAL – s/t (Burrito, 7" EP)**

Boiling over hardcore—a forceful clatter of white-hot guitar, thick, bulldozing basslines and wild drumming. Lurching savagery interspersed with thrash and more straight-forward riffing. The vocals are buried in the mix a bit and Dan does his damnedest to cut through the din. Some mighty intense and crazed sounds emanating from the purplish-brown grooves of this record. That may seem hyperbolic and reminiscent of an old Pushead *MRR* review but it's the truth. (PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, www.soundideadistribution.com)

**DEADLINE – 8/2/82 (Peterbilt, CD)**

Deadline appeared on the *Flex Your Head* compilation and, after those songs were released, recorded eleven more. Those sat in the can until '89, when Peterbilt records released a one-time pressing of 1000 copies and that's been scarce as hell, ever since. So, finally, here's a long-overdue reissue. Deadline very much kept in the HarDCore sound—rough hardcore punk played with youthful agitation and aggression, mixing up fast and slower tempos. In fact, several of those songs fall into the latter category. I'd have to say, out of all the other bands from that era, they came closest to the Faith, sound-wise. Maybe a notch below their better-known brethren but still a worthy artifact. (distr. by Dischord, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington, DC 20007, www.dischord.com)

**DEATH TOKEN – 4 Track Attack (Even Worse, 7" EP)**

A primitive D-Beat or Dis-attack, more accurately. The reverb on some of the vocals is a combination of cheesy and cool. They address the recording method on the title track, calling their sound "a busted ear tape salad to go" and they also endorse their

"exclusively crap equipment." The last track, "Eye Hardly Exist," is a moody instrumental with guitar and ocean effects—there will be quiet after the storm? Oops—wrong band. Otherwise, Death Token keeps things in a purely pillaging mode, definitely busting eardrums along the way if you hold 'em too close to the speakers. (www.geocities.com/evenworse records)

**DISNIHIL – s/t (Chainsaw Safety, CD)**

A strong debut album for this Swedish hardcore-inspired band from New York. Dark, dramatic riffing and a heavy, powerful approach. Hell, they even offer a Sabbathy tip of metallic hat during the bridge of "Markings Consistent With Butchery." Speedy, stun-kill fodder with the occasional somber passage, although the latter isn't a dominant characteristic. In other words, you're not going to hear me bandying about terms like "epic." Besides, only two songs top the three minute mark. A chip off the From Ashes Rise block and those are winning qualities. (PO Box 260318, Bellerose, NY 11426, www.chainsawsafetyrecords.com)

**FIX MY HEAD – s/t (tape)**

The first missive from this Oakland band that includes former Scurvy Dogs vocalist Mike. Four songs of potent, '80s inspired hardcore punk, with some double-speed touches that don't detract. Pretty straightforward lyrics, albeit with sarcastic properties at times. The main emphasis is an extended middle-finger/fuck you mentality and that also comes out through the band's aggressive musical nature. (248 Third St., #725, Oakland, CA 94607, www.myspace.com/fixmyheadhc)

**KULTURKAMPF – Too Cold To Smell The Dead (Trench Rot, 7" EP)**

The title track is a long, ominous instrumental with some Black Flag-ish guitar squiggle pressing into a thrashy burst. The first part is actually the most interesting thing on the record. Raw UK-style hardcore played with enthusiasm if not always the best musical skill, especially the drumming. "Macho Man (Jock Song)" quotes from Survivor's "Eye Of The Tiger" and Sabbath's "Iron Man," with the balance of the fast punk arrangement wrapped around. Standard "up the punx" fodder and just fair, at best. (www.myspace.com/upthebonerpunx)

**LIFE TRAP – Bleak Reality (No Way, 7" EP)**

Jeezus… nope, I haven't converted. It's more a matter of renewal, of inspiration and Life Trap provides that on their first EP. Boiling over hardcore from Nashville. My guess is all these guys were born after the music that influenced them was created. Hell, even their logo appears to be inspired by Articles of Faith's. They've learned their lessons well. Fast and tight as fuck. On the lyrical front, "Lost Cause" deals with racism and I imagine that comes from personal experience since two members of Life Trap are people of color. Critiques of the American dream, conformity, stale suburbia—universal, timeless laments and a timeless musical style, as well. (3211 Idlewood Ave., Richmond, VA 23221, www.no wayrecords.com)

**LOST BOYS – Fuck You (tape)**

In the middle of the front cover of this tape, there are stencil style letters that spell out "Fuck You." This snotty hardcore/punk/garage band most assuredly conveys those feelings. There's a bug up the ass about working, clean-cut assholes and, let's see, what else—I'd imagine a good chunk of the human race. Hell, on "Nerds," the record collection means more than death, destruction and torture. Priorities! My priority is to wear out this tape in the car. (Louche Bertrand, 10 quai de la pêcherie, 69001 Lyon, FRANCE, stillholdingon.free.fr/lostboys.html)

**MASSMORD – Unleashed (Yellow Dog, CD)**

Heavy crust with male/female vocals and a thick, intense sound. This is a pure Scandinavian hardcore attack. Some Tragedy-like guitar lines and since that band takes cues from this style, it boomerangs back. Lyrically, there's the well-worn laments about oppression, the rise of racist regimes, soul-crushing daily existence, but also a tip of the hat to the activist community. There's a sonic thickness, a dark cloud-like ambiance created with all of these elements and played in speedy fashion from start to finish. (PO Box 550208, 10372 Berlin, GERMANY, www.yellowdog.de)

**NIGHTMARE/BURIAL/CRUDE – Axis Of Wolves (HG Fact, CD)**

Three bands, two of 'em Japanese, one of 'em German (Burial) and two songs apiece. This is ostensibly their tour CD and each band contributes powerful material. Nightmare trades in lengthy songs and somehow holds the flailing attack together. With Burial (who have some other solid releases), if I was going to take a blindfold test, I'd guess that they were a Japanese band, stylistically. A relentless aggression. Crude's songs have a stripped-down roughness and it works to their advantage. Each band has their own sound and, taken together, it's a strong lineup. I wish this tour was coming my way. (www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

**NIPPLE VIOLATOR – Double Suck (Bloody Stump, LP)**

What hath Maine wrought? I've heard and seen some weird and/or fucked up bands from that state over the years. In any case, this was recorded in 1993, unleashed on the record-buying public in 2007 and it showed up in my mailbox on a nice sunny day this summer. I imagine you could say what GG Allin was to New Hampshire, Nipple Violator is to Maine. Well, maybe not quite as extreme as that and I don't think these guys will ever reach that level of infamy but Nipple Violator holds their own with the scatological content. The music is snotty, semi-competent punk rock—and, once again, the GG comparison is inevitable. They get by on attitude and it provides the backdrop for such tender songs as "You're My Fuck Toy," "Feces Addict" and their ode to the lord, "Jesus Wants To Fuck You." Share it with that special someone. Hmm…if you want them to *remain* special, maybe that is not such a good idea. (distr.ibuted by Foreign Frequency, http://www.foreignfrequency.com)

**RINGERS – Detention Halls (1-2-3-4 Go!, CD)**

I'm not quite as enamored of Ringers' second album as the first. The sound is similar—tuneful punk that comes across as a combination of the Clash and the late-'80s Bay Area pop/punk sound, but it doesn't always have as much of the boisterousness. Such songs as "Duck and Cover," "Walking Ghost" "New Sins" and "Amateur Hour" do possess the punchiness that made *Curses* such a treat and the lyrical eye (if I may use such illiteration) remains sharp. Being a parochial MassHole, I like the local references to such spots as Harvard Ave and the Back Bay. When played back to back, though, there seemed a tad more grittiness in the sound on *Curses* and, interestingly, they were both recorded at Dead Air in Western Mass. Ultimately, just a slight letdown and there are some strong moments here. (S. Stevenson, 1321 Glenfield Ave, Oakland, CA 94602, www.1234gorecords.com)

**SOCIALCIDE – Burn In Hell, Bundy (Kangaroo/Even Worse, 7" EP)**

Slam-bang hardcore, following a ripsnortin' demo that Even Worse pressed on vinyl. One interesting thing is the new recording sounds rougher than the demo. In any case, Socialcide's calling card is raw,

old-school hardcore, established ca. 1982, although their cover of Wolfpack NYC's "Suicide" dates from the later part of the decade. In fact, there's an early Revelation Records feeling, as well, with the fuzzed-out guitar and breakdown style. And those bands were trying to bring back an older feel, as well. These guys do justice to those influences. (www.geocities.com/evenworse records or www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

**UNDER PRESSURE – Black Bile (Fashionable Idiots, LP)**

Under Pressure continues with their dark blend of hardcore and fired-up rock 'n roll. Maybe rock 'n roll is a misnomer since that will sometimes conjure up visions of guys in clichéd poses but, well, this is pretty rockin'. The lead licks are worked into the arrangements instead of dominating them. It should be noted that their guitar player does come on like Angus Young live but it's more like Angus in the midst of a caffeine jag. Cam's hoarse, strangled vocals sound like Celtic Frost's Tom G. Warrior with a bad cold—kind of. So there are some heady tunes here, especially the speedy "Whip and Rein" and the charged-up title track. Unfortunately, the momentum comes to a screeching halt with the snail's pace, endless "The Last." This song painfully drones on for over half of the second side and is a tedious exercise, intense effect aside. Otherwise, it's another strong release for this Winnipeg band. If it had been a one sided 12", without "The Last," it would have been 100% killer. (PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

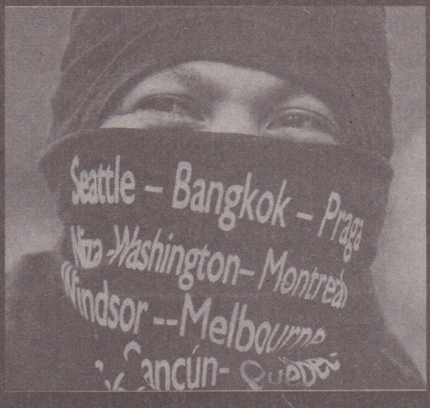
**VICIOUS CYCLE – I'm Watching You (Vinyl Addict, 7" EP)**

Mining the old-school hardcore sound and, as I've written countless times, if done right, it remains inspiring. Vicious Cycle, from Sudbury, Ontario, has it down. Fast and pissed-sounding and it has my foot pounding the floor as I listen. Some feedbacky guitar on occasion, especially in the middle part of "Bent." "I'm Watching You" also slows it down and has an early '80s west coast punk vibe. More, please. (1835, De Bourgogne, Sherbrooke, QC, CANADA, J1J 1B1, www.myspace.com/vinyladdictrecords)

Al Quint/PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903/email: suburban voice@earth link.net/Sonic Overload radio:http://sonic overload.moocowrecords.com

In memory of Jane Simpkin (3/28/65-9/11/01)

## Go Team, Smash State!




**"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?**

I no longer have to work for a living, thanks to circumstances I won't go into at the moment. I can do my own projects full time, and I can actually enjoy the rest of my life. I've got credit cards and investments. I own a car and a house. No doubt about it, I've become middle class.

In a way, I've loosely paralleled my parents' journey up the social ladder. They started out as working class Polish immigrants from war-torn Europe in the mid-1950s. By the time I went off to UC Santa Cruz in 1972, they were solidly, comfortably middle class. I dropped out of graduate school in 1979 to join the wage-laboring proletariat. Now, I too am middle class, though my social status is far more precarious than was my parents'.

Take health care, for example. I exhausted my eighteen months of Federal COBRA Blue Shield health insurance from my last job a few weeks ago. I paid the full cost of the insurance, that is, what the company paid as well as what had previously been deducted from my paycheck, plus a COBRA administration fee. Now I'm on Cal-COBRA, the California-mandated equivalent, for the next year and a half. That's costing me almost forty dollars a month more, for the same coverage. And, unless Ah-nold manages to push through his market-based knock-off of universal health care, I'll use Federal HIPAA regulations to convert to a permanent health insurance policy, which promises to cost even more for less coverage.

Being middle class, I can afford to purchase supplemental health insurance to augment my HIPAA policy. That I'm now entirely dependent on legally protected health care and insurance portability has not escaped me, however. When COBRA screwed up a couple of months ago and reported that I wasn't paid up, resulting in the temporary cancellation of my coverage, I completely freaked out. My anxiety went through the roof and I was in a panic until I straightened out the error. One of my middle class lifelines is my health care, and the incident demonstrated how shaky that was.

My parents made their climb up the economic ladder when folks had careers. People sought to work for a company for life. Unions had a measure of strength in those days, and one of their top demands was always job security. My dad worked most of his life for the government, a civil servant who went from loading dock foreman to managing the Pacific missile range. He retired early, and was guaranteed perks like access to high-level health care and a pension with built-in cost-of-living adjustments.

By the time I toppled out of the ivory tower's rarified atmosphere, into the murk and mire of wage slavery, the idea of a career had become a joke. The deindustrialization of the United States was beginning in earnest, unions were crumbling, and corporate capitalism was demonstrating its lack of loyalty to the American working class in spades. Workers were reciprocating, and no one expected to work for the same company for life. I never worked at the same job for more than six or seven years. Many of the companies I worked for tried their damnedest not to provide benefits to their employees, one in particular going so far as to declare all its workers freelancers and independent contractors until busted by the government. My last job canned me, allowing me to take an early retirement as well, but leaving me with bare bones health care.

I realize that having shitty, expensive health insurance is better than having no health insurance at all. 47-million Americans—mostly working class and poor—are uninsured, so I hold onto my pitiful policy tooth and nail. Nor am I ashamed to say that if the Governator pushes through a better deal for me, I'd take it in a New York minute. My point is that, while being working class is still hell, becoming middle class is not the guarantee of security it once was.

My mom didn't have to work. Now, it takes two people, sometimes working two or three jobs each, to maintain the middle class life my dad could afford on his salary alone. Not only has the range of health care and pension benefits become shabbier, it's no longer a sure thing as health insurers regularly deny or cancel coverage, and corporate pension plans go belly-up one after another. Middle class saving has plummeted over the last forty years, and a good number of people in that middle class are also just one or two paychecks from the street. So, while it can be debated as to whether the American middle-class has shrunk demographically in the past few decades, there

can be no doubt that, today, it takes a lot more time and effort to maintain a middle class existence that is far more economically precarious.

Now, for the sixty-four dollar question. Might there be a reason for this, other than the relentless avarice of corporations needing to maximize profits?

My parents were part of a post-World War II economic wave that saw the explosive growth of private-sector wealth, suburbs, the white middle class, and a consumer-oriented economy. In 1958, John Kenneth Galbraith wrote a book, *The Affluent Society*, the title of which neatly summarized how America portrayed itself going into the '60s. And affluence meant the ability to buy more and more commodities, with the growing leisure time to enjoy them. Both the threat demonstrated by union organizing and the socialist upsurge during the Great Depression, and the need during the Cold War to outperform the Soviet Union, helped to underpin an economic prosperity that, in turn, produced its own discontents.

This much-touted affluence did not include significant parts of the society—black people for instance—which helped precipitate a civil rights movement, race riots in America's cities, the rise of a black middle class, black power, and revolutionary nationalism. The burgeoning affluent white middle class raised a generation with the comforts of abundance, only to see significant numbers of their children rebel, even reject their middle class status, by protesting the Vietnam war, immersing themselves in New Left politics, or dropping out to become hippies. By turning affluence into austerity and putting the screws to the middle class, it was hoped that a repeat of the social unrest of the '60s could be avoided.

There was an interesting notion circulating in those years that uprisings by the oppressed didn't occur when social conditions were at their worst, but actually happened when there was the glimmer of improvement. The rising expectations and aspirations sparked by incremental progress was what prompted rebellion and revolution in the lower classes, not the total desperation of being up against the wall with nothing left to lose. Fostering a climate of increasing scarcity in which even the middle class finds it harder and harder just to tread water helps insure that America's oppressed minorities don't get any wrong ideas.

Those who participated in the various social movements of the 1960s who neither flew off into the ether of Hindu/LSD mysticism nor sank into the quicksand of one or another kind of Leninism—that is, those who straddled the divide between the counterculture and the New Left—often came to similar conclusions about America's affluent society. The more politically aware communalists, Diggers, Yippies, Provos, Motherfuckers, et al, realized that US society was so wealthy, so abundant in commodities and leisure time, that an entire alternative social order could maintain itself, even flourish, simply on what this society threw away. Some even fancied that their marginal cultural and political spaces would grow strong enough to entirely supplant the dominant society. The absurdity of this fantasy aside, any potential for creating an alternative social order by siphoning off or stealing a fraction of society's prosperity was easily annulled by replacing abundance with scarcity. If the lower and middle classes spend all their waking hours just struggling to make ends meet, that possibility is effectively negated.

Not to be too heavy handed, but the history lesson here bears repeating.

America's economic collapse in the Great Depression generated unprecedented labor organizing, the most radical elements of which had called for both revolution and socialism. The *bourgeoisie* responded to this threat with equal parts carrot, stick, and diversion. The diversion was entry into the second World War, which drafted American workers and shipped them overseas to fight and kill German and Japanese workers. The stick was a savage post-war anti-communism, under the catchall called McCarthyism, which domesticated the American working class and gelded its union movement. And the carrot was a post-war consumer economy and leisure society built on the myth that everyone was middle class. When the affluent society failed to lull significant segments of the population into soporific acceptance of the status quo, and instead produced the racial conflicts, political protests, and countercultural experimentation that we now call the '60s, it was time for a further tweak. Austerity replaces affluence, the middle class is driven to the edge, and the ruling class once again turns their full attention to maximizing profits.

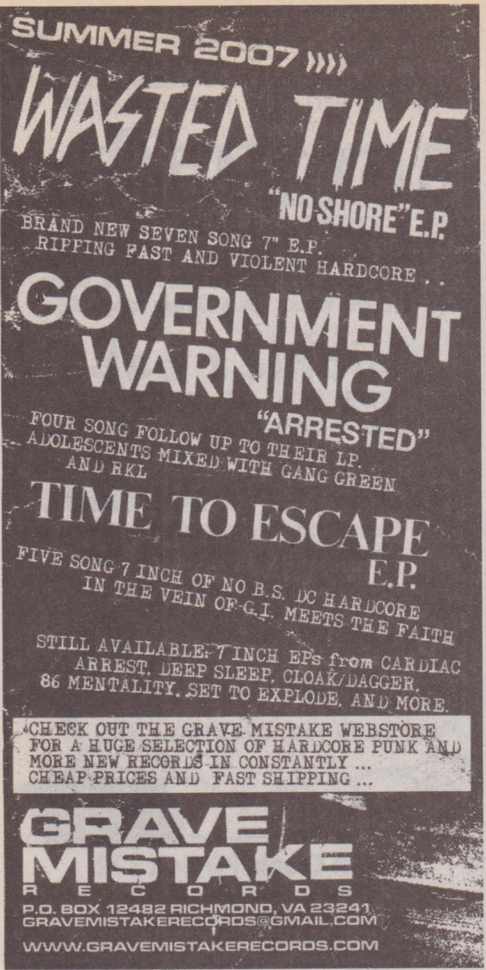
What may disturb some of you is that I seem to think that the capitalist ruling class—the *bourgeoisie*—is some kind of secret, totally evil, smoke-filled backroom cabal that is consciously conspiring to fuck over the rest of us. Nothing could be further from the truth. I really do loath conspiracy theories, of any sort. But I do assume that, nine times out of ten, people act out of their economic interests, and that different social classes in society have different economic interests. After that, systems theory and Marxist notions of "class consciousness" can adequately explain how the capitalist class asserts its interests, and control, over the working class.

A basic tenet of systems theory is that, an ecosystem for example, can be entirely self-organizing and self-regulating based solely on the autonomous, self-activity of its members. There is no "grand council" of the redwood forest for instance, yet the redwood forest functions just fine without one. There is overwhelming evidence that biological systems, and growing evidence that social systems, abide by this rule. All living systems, and in theory human social systems, thus have an innate capacity to self-organize and self-regulate. That this can apply to social classes within a larger society is not much of a stretch.

Follow up systems theory with Marx's idea that one of the preconditions for a social class to gain power in society is for that class to become self-aware. In other words, class conscious. This requires that the class in question go beyond the unconscious self-activity, self-organization, and self-regulation common to all systems, towards the creation of organizationss and institutions of self-reflection. self-governance, and self-defense. In Marxist terms, the social class must move from being a "class in itself" to a "class for itself." The *bourgeoisie* exemplifies just such a "class for itself" with its various business newspapers and journals, its numerous commercial and manufacturing associations, its vast private security and intelligence apparatus, and its well-oiled lobbying and influence machinery. Thanks to such class conscious activity and organization, they are in *de facto* control over government at all levels of society, affirming Marx's definition of the state as "the executive committee of the ruling class."

The capitalist ruling class, therefore, does not have to conspire to globalize the economy, or bust the unions, or undermine the middle class. It does so openly, discussing such matters candidly in the *Wall Street Journal* and then carrying them out through the marketplace and government policy. Obviously there is obfuscation, public relations, and influence buying. But out-and-out conspiracy? It's hardly needed. Nor, I might add, is the *bourgeoisie* particularly evil. It is merely pursuing its class interests, with a vengeance.

Common wisdom used to be that the poor far outnumbered the rich, and that a strong, prosperous middle class was the best possible bulwark against the poor ultimately expropriating the rich. Supposedly, this was one of the lessons the *bourgeoisie* learned from the Great Depression. This astute observation no longer holds much influence these days as the middle class gets driven to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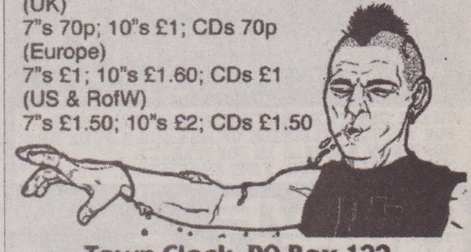

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the wall. Whether this means that poor and working people will rise up and "expropriate the expropriators" is, at this point, the subject of another column.

**PERSONAL PROPAGANDA...** To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time,* from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hool igentsia@mac.com.

September 6, 2007

In a van going across America with four Brits and Willie Nelson. Will return with stories of glory, fame and fortune sailing the high seas next month. Until then, live free and be merry, this time is ours.

Erika

This is not a crime about thought," says the assistant US attorney. Then what is it?

Mahmud Faruq Brent, a 30-year-old DC taxi driver, is about to spend the next 15 years behind bars for "conspiring to support a terrorist organization." No one, not even prosecutors, believes that the Ohio-born Brent planned to attack the United States. Brent was convicted of supporting Lakshar-e-Taiba, an Islamist group in Pakistan, and of attending one of its training camps.

"This defendant took action and he offered himself to a terrorist organization," explains the prosecutor. But all the "action" took place in the would-be jihadi's brain. There was no terrorist act. There was no crime.

Based in Pakistan, Lakshar-e-Taiba has attacked India, which it seeks to drive out of Kashmir. It has also carried out terrorist acts in Pakistan as part of its campaign to oust the military junta of General Pervez Musharraf. It's easy to see why Musharraf is afraid of the group. One could understand why the US, as Musharraf's ally, might honor Pakistan's request to extradite one of its members. But Lakshar-e-Taiba has never attacked a target in the United States, the West—anywhere outside the Asian subcontinent. Why are American taxpayers footing the bill to lock this man up for 15 years?

Abdulrahman Farhane, a Brooklyn bookstore owner accused with Mahmud Brent of supporting the Pakistani group Lakshar-e-Taiba, received 13 years in federal prison. Two others charged in the case are awaiting sentencing.

As the government breaks up one alleged "plot" after another (Columbine-type massacre narrowly avoided as high school kid nabbed with "hit list" of fellow students! Crazy Muslim radicals caught with camera full of digital photos of tourist attractions!) it's easy to see that anyone—yes, even you—can get swept up by hysterical grand inquisitors wielding dubious legal logic as naïve journalists dutifully report the latest victory against imminent danger.

"The government is arresting individuals on terrorism charges based on what individuals have said or thought—not on actual, concrete plans," editorialized the *Daytona Beach News-Journal* about Hamid Hayat, one of countless Muslims nabbed after 9/11 for "providing material support or resources to terrorists." The feds "only proved that he did things that sometimes precede acts of terrorism. It was pre-emptive justice, but was also speculative justice."

Most people have indulged in theoretical discussions about how to rob a bank or even how to get away with murder. They obviously don't intend to carry out their "plots." Yet any of us could fall victim to the recent tendency to equate crimes of intent to crimes of action.

Jack McClellan, 45, is a self-described pedophile who runs a blog that advocates sex with children. "If you look at things he has posted, he clearly is a pedophile," says Lt. Thomas Sirkel of the Sheriff's Department in Los Angeles, where McClellan lives. As far as we know, however, he has never acted on it. His record is clean.

Local mothers are plotting—er, organizing—to "to push lawmakers in Sacramento to legislate Mr. McClellan out of business," reports *The New York Times.* "Just the idea that this person could get away with what he was doing and no one could press charges has made me angry," Jane Thompson of East Los Angeles told the paper. Of course, what really angers her is that he's getting away with what he's *thinking.*

I don't blame her. But McClellan hasn't *done* anything. Do we really want to live in a culture that penalizes violent and impure thoughts?

Thoughtcrime pours big bucks into CBS Television, broadcaster of the take-a-bath-after-viewing program "To Catch a Predator." No one cares about entrapped suckers like the guy "in a SpongeBob SquarePants jacket, armed with a bottle of K-Y Jelly." Like dozens of other would-be pervs, the 21-year-old man thinks he's going to meet a 14-year-old girl for sex, only to find Dateline's Chris Hansen and a passel of cops waiting to arrest him.

Run your neighborhood through your state's Megan's Law database and you'll likely conclude that sex offenders are all over the place. One is too many, but the problem isn't as widespread as we've been led to believe. Many of the registrants are statutory rapists like the 17-year-old Georgia boy doing hard time for consensual sex with a 15-year-old girl.

"Anti-predator stings involving decoys may actually outnumber crimes involving real victims," reports *Rolling Stone.* "To Catch a Predator" claims there are 50,000 child molesters online. But "a study conducted by the University of New Hampshire estimated that there were fewer than 2900 arrests for online sexual offenses against minors in a single year. What's more, only 1152 involved victims who were approached by strangers on the Internet—and more than half this number were actually cops posing as kids."

In other words, most men who fantasize about sex with children don't actually do it. Judeo-Christian tradition rewards those who deny temptation; we throw them in jail. Perverted Justice, the group that trolls chat rooms to set up stings for "To Catch a Predator," has a fitting name.

Ari Fleischer warned us to watch what we say. Now we'd better watch what we think.

*Silk Road To Ruin: Is Central Asia The New Middle East?*(NBM Publishing, 304 pp., price $22.95), is out now. You can get the book at any bookstore or comics shop, or on the Internet, or order a signed copy by mailing $30 to the above address (include your mailing address and how you'd like it signed).

*Silk Road To Ruin* is a comprehensive primer to the political powder keg of Central Asia—Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyztan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Xinjiang in Western China—that will soon make the current war in Iraq look like Dick Cheney's proverbial "cakewalk." It includes 100-pages of graphic novella accounts of my trips to the Stans, photos and maps of the region, and in-depth essays explaining everything from oil pipeline politics to buzkashi, the craziest and most dangerous sport currently played by the human race.

Like most Americans of my vintage, I grew up being taught to fear and hate the Soviet Union. Of course, by the time I showed up, the USSR was experiencing glasnost and perestroika and what not, but Reagan still harangued them as the Evil Empire. Communism wasn't really what I feel I was taught to fear, more the fact they had nukes pointed at us and were a threat to us somehow. My parent's experience had the added level of hatred of communism. Perhaps the powers that be at that time decided people needed to have more information to fuel their fear as to why communism was/is so loathsome. Although from what I have read, the effort to attack the philosophy of communism and Marxism often backfired, which probably explains why later generations were just taught to hate them. I believe the same parallel could be made with our current scarecrow of "Islamic terrorists." There was a brief interlude after 9-11 where people seemed to be asking the question "Why don't they like us?" or "What is their motivation"? But that has long since passed into the eclipse of fear mongering and racist, xenophobic hate.

Oddly, what I remember from growing up fearing the Soviets is largely their militarism. From my perspective, the parades with missiles and semi-goose-stepping soldiers seemed reminiscent of the Nazis. I had no idea what communism was or what the Soviets believed in. I know the media made a big deal of all the "waiting in lines" for things, like bread, etc. Oh, and how eager Russians were to get American blue jeans. Looking back on it, it's pretty pathetic that our main arguments against them had to do with consumerism and materialism. It probably makes a pretty good argument against us, if anything. The militarism that seemed so threatening I realize had more to do with how they expressed it rather than any innate sense of being more violent than the capitalist block. I think the history of US foreign policy bears that out pretty well. I realize now that our militarism is of a much more insidious variety—we don't do big parades and show off our missiles; we use them, and largely out of view of the public.

I just got back a couple weeks ago from visiting Russia, which is part of what has had me reflecting on what I was taught about the USSR and communism. It was quite an experience, to say the least, and it is very different from the other parts of Europe I have seen. There is quite a bit of remaining Soviet iconography and fascinating history which I just ate up. I certainly can't claim to have thoroughly experienced the country or have a great understanding of it.

I consider myself a socialist of sorts, and have thought highly of Lenin and Trotsky, but really didn't associate them at all with any of the later developments of the Soviet Union, which, despite my socialist tendencies, I saw and still see as a pretty fucked-up state. A revolution gone wrong, I guess you could say. China or Vietnam probably serve as far better examples of communism in that sense. So I have been mulling over how much of my disdain for latter-day USSR stuff was political and how much was indoctrination. I think my concerns with the Soviet government were that it didn't serve the people that well—not to say the US government does. Perhaps on average it was better for the average person, I don't know. But I know from what I could gather that it was not what Lenin and certainly not what Marx had envisioned.

I was introduced to Marxism and socialism in high school, around the time of the collapse of the USSR. Perhaps if it had been a few years earlier I would have thought in more depth about the elephant in the room which exemplified communism to so many, but somehow I found little interest in the country that was made into the bogeyman of American's lives for generations.

To be sure, Russia is still a poor country overall. There is a class of rich elites, and a lot of people who seem to emulate the extreme materialism and vanity of the west, but also many who reject it. It's a really good example of the forces that make both capitalism and socialism arise. Although I have mixed feelings about the post-Stalin era USSR, I found myself somewhat sympathetic to that period. The promises of the Russian revolution, which have inspired so many around the world, seem in some ways to have fallen sadly flat and plunged into a extreme consumerism and capitalism that I think would reanimate Lenin's well-preserved corpse and send it wreaking havoc throughout Petrograd.

I am no expert on modern-day Soviet socio-economic studies, and I could be wrong on all of this, of course. America still takes the capitalist scum cake for sure. I found myself both revolted by our perverse influence and the loss of a force which, even in a ramshackle way, tried to counter it. Despite my delicate socialist sensibilities, I left having much more respect for the USSR then I came in with.

To imagine, at some point in the late-1980s I went to an exhibition game where the Chicago Blackhawks played the Russian Olympic hockey team. Repeat, exhibition game—who cares who wins, right? They were touring the US as some kind of "goodwill mission." Well, anybody who followed the 'hawks at that time can tell you they had some rough and tumble Mofos on that team. Guys that refused to wear helmets and whose faces looked like the surface of the moon, riddled with scars. As a kid I saw a lot of NHL games and this was by far the most violent I had ever seen. A fucking exhibition game! And the audience loved it and chanted shit like "Kill Ivan" or "Beat the Ruskie/Commie," etc. I got the distinct impression that the players were doing it for the crowd. What's weirder is that as usual, most of the players are Canadian, not Yanks. Yeah, I was confused. I don't remember who won. But I guess that didn't matter. Perhaps it's a good analogy for the whole Cold War.

The experience got me thinking about how you can approach being immersed in a different culture (and Russia is still a Western country, sort of). You can react, like I saw many Americans or Europeans react, with contempt or arrogance for how the place is different and "inferior" to home, or you can go with an open mind, and just see what you see and enjoy the ride. Although I did find myself aggravated and at times alienated by some differences, and saw other Amerikanskis reacting against this with arrogance and anger, I had to check my frustration sometimes. The whole phenomenon of ugly Americans would fill a whole column in and of itself. Like guys repeating stuff louder and louder in English to Russian vendors who don't clearly don't speak English. No wonder Russians often seemed so dour and sullen around us. I speak no Russian at all. I have never spent much time in a country where most people don't have some knowledge of English or where I don't speak the language somewhat. I tried to pick up some Russian via a phrase book on the fly (not easy, mind you). I have found that if even in some rudimentary way you try to speak someone's language; they open up to you and are really quite friendly. Even the stern, never-smiling Russian dudes crack a smile and go out of their way to help you. I think it's a fairly global process, and quite primal. You try to communicate with someone in a way they understand, even if it's very hard for you, and it seems to create among most people a degree of rapport. We Americans completely take this for granted. When people try to speak English and they have trouble, we just mock them and are impatient.

I am reminded how valuable the experience of traveling is. I realize it is a privilege to be able to do so, because it can be so expensive, especially if you are going overseas. Of course, punks seem to have discovered many ingenious ways of doing it cheaply, which is very cool. I am not a huge fan of the vagabond, dropout lifestyle some people subscribe to, as I have railed against in some of these columns in the lovely *MRR*. But I do think that traveling—going into new environments, new places with different ways of thinking—is a precious experience.

So on the punk rock front; I am co-releasing another 7"! The next Starving Times/ BroederKont collaboration is a crust band from Cape Town, South Africa called Toxic Death Kommando Militia (TDKM), formerly Skum. They play some ripping Disrupt, Nausea, and ENT-inspired stuff and are absolutely amazing! The record should be out in a month or two and the press will be 500. It will also be four dollars ppd. I am trying to arrange trades with people for this and the Sleeping at the Popes 7" which is already out (also from SA—political punk). People please email me if interested! I am really liking running a label lately and am finding it especially enjoyable working with pals Abri and Emily on these projects, which makes it easy and fun. A big thanks to them and all the labels that have helped us out!

Nick Daniels, PO Box 18884, Oakland, CA 94619
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**Trial by Ska**

Look, I don't want to come off as a big fucking baby here, but being on the board of directors at The Mr. Roboto Project isn't the bowl of cherries you all might think it is. The work is largely thankless. Our job is to oversee the performance of countless terrible *terrible terrible* bands. I won't harp on this point too much, as it might shatter illusions of my egalitarian social attitude, but I think of the hours upon hours of utter tripe poured into my ears as akin to a sort of trial by fire. Walking on burning coals, if you will. Or "Test Your Might" from Mortal Kombat.

At the end of the day I convince myself that I'm somehow a "better person" for having endured such punishment, which I suppose makes me a kind of flagellant. Every once in a while, divvying up shows at the monthly meeting, a show ends up sounding so utterly terrible that one cannot help but want to bear witness. Call it "Trainwreck Syndrome," call it what you will, but recently I giddily elected myself to watch a ska show (The Waffle Stompers, The Lavar Burtones, and Barker's Beauties).

I'll air my dirty laundry before anyone else who may be privy to such scandalous details can out my hypocrisy. I used to be *really* into ska. It's what got me into punk. The Mighty Mighty Bosstones? Loved them. The Pietasters? Saw 'em twice. Less Than Jake? Their lyrics are probably still nestled deep within the crevices of my brainmeats. I even had a fucking Moon Ska Records t-shirt. But it's been over 12 years since I've willingly subjected myself to ska, which is why I was incredibly stoked at the opportunity to relive my pubescent memories.

Unfortunately for my pubescent memories, ska and its purveyors aren't anything like I remember. The shocking truth is that most of the kids into ska nowadays are horrible shitheads. And I use the term "kids" loosely, as most of the people in attendance were well into their 20s. And I use the term "people in attendance" just as loosely, because there were maybe four paying customers. About 40 people were at the show, of course, because ska bands are like Petri dishes that produce skanking horn players.

But here's SkAsshole Proof #1: There were *zero* people watching the bands. For each band (beside Bad Influence, who played first and are left off the list because they aren't a ska band and therefore are not subject to my seething hatred), there were maybe three or four people inside for each band, including myself and the promoter. Yet each band tried "working" the "crowd" like lecherous game-show hosts. Who likes being talked down to by game-show hosts? Not me.

Hence, SkAsshole Proof #2.

Proof #3 is the fact that each band insisted on playing with the front door wide open so that everyone sitting out front could know that their brass section was totally kicking the ass of all brass sections before and after. Each time I would close it, it would somehow be opened again while I wasn't looking. It was this weird temper tantrum, like they were somehow turning up their noses to everyone outside. Regardless, it was pretty shitty to try to subject the entire neighborhood of Wilkinsburg to the whitest music ever played inside Roboto. And that is a fucking feat in of itself.

This was all before Barker's Beauties played. I felt kind of bad formulating these proofs in my head. Most of these kids weren't *huge* assholes, just naive and wanting to hit the big-time. I guess the two go hand in hand when you're in a ska band—naiveté and expecting mainstream success playing ska in 2007—which I guess doesn't make you a total jerk. So I felt kinda bad. But then Barker's Beauties played.

SkAsshole Proofs, generally, #4-6: BB spent most of the evening drinking in their minivan across the street. BB has a song about "what you can't do here." BB wants to know "where in this part of town you can find some jailbait," and subsequently has a song about it. During their set, one of the horn players asked if anyone liked the mural on the wall, the mural I painted. Of course no one said anything because there wasn't anyone in the room. After a few second pause he says, "I think it sucks." Not that I'm really wounded by what the trumpet player in a sixth-wave ska act has to say about my admittedly pretty ridiculous mural, but it was still a mindblowingly random and shitty thing to profess to an empty room.

SkAsshole Proof #7-9: Barker's Beauties played for at least 40 minutes, was pissed that I told them they did not have time for two more songs at ten o'clock, and continued dicking around on the drums after I turned on all the lights.

SkAsshole Proof #10: Frat letters tattooed on biceps.

Probably the only redeeming quality of these bands is the fact that they know how to load out quickly. There's really nothing more enraging than bands oblivious to the fact that I do not live in Roboto and they cannot hang out for however long they damn well please. They were doing such a good job at loading out that I began to feel a little guilty about my proofs again, until one guy "thanked" me for watching the show, which became SkAsshole Proof #11.

"Yeah, it's too bad this place is a trash-hole."

"Um…OK?" I stuttered, completely caught off guard for some reason.

"Yeah, you know, you should really get in touch with your landlord so that, you know, you don't have to be in this shithole, you know?"

"Oh…OK! We've been here for about eight years now, I think we're doing just fine."

"Pfff…I guess. Have fun in the ghetto."

In hindsight, I probably should I punched him in the gut and told him to go fuck himself back to the South Side (they weren't even on tour. They're local!) The only thing that gives me peace of mind about it is the thought that they probably had to talk to the neighbors after I left.

It was one of those cold April days where your breath still hangs in the air after you finish talking. The sun, along with our winter jackets, kept us warm on our walk along 34th Street until we reached Macy's. As we entered the place, I could feel that stuffy, uncomfortable warmth that always seems to hug big department stores in the city during the winter. With me was my stepdad, Nick, and my mom, Barbara. She had only a few months to live because of the fast progression of the lung cancer she was diagnosed with some months earlier. She had finished many rounds of chemo, and was now ending her radiation treatments at Sloan-Kettering.

The reason we had ventured to Macy's that day was, well, odd. We had gone there to buy her a wig. The cancer had spread from her lungs throughout her entire body, and was now in her head. Her brain. This is called metastasis. Nice word for an ugly thing. Actually, there are lots of nice words that are used with cancer. To *soften* the blow. Wonderful.

As we walked through the ground floor of Macy's toward the rear elevators, I could smell all the perfumes and aftershaves. But somehow they didn't linger in my nose like they usually did. All I could smell was the stuffy uncomfortableness of the place.

We got off the elevator at the third or fourth floor and followed the signs to the wig department. It was just a couple of enclosed glass cabinets adjacent to each other, tucked away in a far corner of Macy's.

Behind one of the counters stood an older gentleman, and behind him, various wigs placed stylishly upon Styrofoam heads that were faceless and eyeless.

The man's smile was warm as he greeted us. Nick and I smiled back, but my mother didn't. There was a woman trying on wigs in front of a tabletop mirror, and when she saw us, she turned and smiled. We smiled back to her as we watched her adjust the wig on her head, with the price tag hanging off the back and all. My mom, again, didn't smile.

"It's all right, sweetie," said the woman to my mom, "everything is gonna be all right." My mom, with a scarf covering her quickly balding head, just nodded.

"You'll get used to it," she added, "really, you will."

I looked at Nick, and he looked at me. And we both smiled. But they weren't real smiles. They were smiles of fear, and desperation. We didn't know what else to do.

"Which one should I get?" my mom asked Nick and I. We had trouble understanding what she said at first, because her tongue was swollen from all the chemo and radiation and shit.

We looked at the wall of faceless heads for a long time not saying anything. The reason my mom wanted a wig was because I had planned a trip to Cancun with my brothers, Wendy, and Nick that was to take place in a couple of weeks. I figured it would be our last chance to all be together, and of course, I was right. I fucking hate being right.

Nick and I and my mom looked at the wigs, and to tell you the truth, I had no fucking clue which one she should get. There were black straight ones. There were blonde curly ones. They even had a punk-rock-colored one. Somehow, I didn't think my mom wanted that one.

"Nice wigs, huh?" said the woman in front of the tabletop mirror, "I already have a couple. This is going to be my third!"

Nick and I just looked at her and smiled. My mom seemed off in a daze.

"It's really not that bad," explained the woman, "in fact, your mother can have the hair she has always wanted."

We nodded our heads, and I was surprised Nick didn't make any bad jokes. I guess it just wasn't one of those days.

We continued to look at all the wigs, lost in our frustration over this insane situation. One we thought we'd never find ourselves in. Ever.

"Why don't you describe the kind of hair your mother used to have?" said the woman to me. And to Nick.

Nick and I began to describe it to her as my mom stood there, listening. We explained that her hair was brownish-blonde and very, very beautiful. As Nick started to explain the texture and feel of it, I could see his emotions tearing him apart. He knew he'd never feel or smell the real stuff again. I felt tears welling up in my eyes, and saw them in Nick's.

It was then I think my mom somehow snapped out of that cancer-morphine haze, and told Nick and I to go shopping, and to leave her alone at the wig counter. She told Nick to take me to the electronic games department, and buy me whatever I wanted. She told us to come back in a little while, and she'd be fine.

Nick and I walked away from my mom, the woman with the wigs, and the guy behind the counter, feeling very uncomfortable. We did not want to leave her alone, so we didn't. We just went around the corner, and peeked over at her every few seconds.

I watched my mom try on all sorts of wigs. As she would try each one on, she'd look in the mirror and brush the hair as if it were her own. The man behind the counter smiled warmly at her as she brushed the various wigs she was trying on. I could see in the way that she brushed and stroked the hair that she missed her own, and was feeling what it was like to have a full head of hair again. I quickly wiped a tear from my cheek, hoping Nick didn't see it.

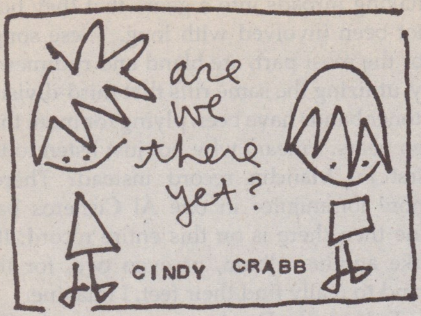
Finally my mom put on a wig and wore it for more than a few minutes. She just kept staring at herself in the tabletop mirror, and brushing and caressing the hair. The man behind the counter just smiled, and the woman who was trying on other wigs was telling my mom she looked great in it.

Nick and I walked back to the wig department and to my mom. When she saw us, she smiled A warm smile. A smile I'll carry with me forever. On her head was a wig that looked exactly like her hair. Only it was shorter than she had worn it recently. It was the kind of hairstyle she had worn about twenty years earlier. And it made her look younger. Like the mom I remember when she pushed me on the swing set. Or when I sat in her lap. Or when she bathed me. The same hair. The same mom. She was beautiful. Like a mother. She was beautiful. Like a woman.

I felt a lump begin to rise in the back of my throat, and looked at my mom. She looked at me, and suddenly I wanted to be in her arms. To be hugging her, cradled in her warmth. Safe from the world. I wanted to be home again. The lump in my throat got bigger. My mom looked me in the eyes, then put her finger to her lips. And I knew all was said that had to be.

I'll never forget my mom and that wig, that cold winter day at Macy's. That day my mom stood up in the face of all that was wrong, and reminded Nick and I about pride and courage. She tried on wigs, majestically, and somehow, with synthetic material on her head, had shown us the true meaning of beauty. She took away our uneasiness and fears with just the smallest of a smile, and let us know that life was worth living.

Endnotes:
I've run this story before, but now it holds more meaning to me than ever. I am very sick. Please go to www.myspace.com/help-georgetabb for details.
Bless all of you who have helped so far and thank all of you for caring so much.
It *is* punk rock to love one another and care. It's top-40 pop to not!!!!
Special thanks to Devin, Cathy, Monica, Evan, Marc, and most of all, you!!!!




What was it that brought you into punk? Was it just the music or that you couldn't fit in? Was it so much anger inside of you that had no way out? Was it the emptiness of pop music and looking for something more? Was it rebellion, pure and simple? Was it because you had a punk crush? Was it because it was cool? What has it grown into? Was it because punk was the only thing that could keep you alive?

What brought you into it, and what are you going to do now? The reasons we start aren't always enough to hold us steady. We have to constantly rethink what we want from where we are, and how are we going to move forward, once we have treaded water long enough, once we have learned how to swim. We have to recreate what punk means in our lives so we don't just turn our backs on it when we grow.

There is so much pushing on us, so much capitalist bullshit standard beauty crap, what makes us worthwhile, what shit our parents shoved at us what shit our schools did, and the magazine ads and the shitty music and lack of culture, or patriarchal culture, and shoved at us "Why don't you smile?" and meaningless debates where they don't even begin to ask the right questions, and lovelessness and alienation and despair.

So yeah, it makes sense to define ourselves as other. As against all that regardless of whether or not we know what we're for. But I want to know, someday, what you want to create. I want to know, what's the revolution we're gonna make? Because it's *us* vs. *them*, but who is *them*, exactly? Is it my 91-year-old grandma, who was talking to me about the gay rodeo? She said, "I used to think gay people deserved to die, but now I just can't imagine what my problem was!"

Is *them* my mom, who never made it out of the suburbs and couldn't figure out a way to resist beyond school boards and unshaved armpits, and teaching us daughters that we could do anything? Who it took 13 years to get out of an abusive relationship, and by then it was too late, the aftershocks killed her.

Is *them* my older sister, events coordinator at Dartmouth, who is too afraid of the world to let her kids play outside, and whose method of survival requires holding tight to forgetting and denial?

Is *them* the kids who aren't punk enough, or the kids who are punker than thou? The ones who don't care about anything other than drinking and fucking shit up, or the ones who are so self-righteous in their politics you can't even talk to them? Is it the old punks, for leaving, or the young ones, for repeating the same actions and making the same mistakes? And what is the difference between critique and infighting?

In Andrea Dworkin's book *Heartbreak: The Political Memoir of a Feminist Militant*, she says, "I learned never to ignore the reality of power pure and simple. I also learned that one could get a bunch of people to do something brave or new or rebellious, but if it didn't come from their deepest hearts they could not maintain the honor of their commitment...nor can rhetoric create in people a sustained determination to win."

What is the revolution we're going to make? What is deepest in our hearts? I know that sometimes all we can do is figure out a way to stay alive, but after that, what is it we're feeling, and what are we doing just because it's been set up for us to do? I want us to think hard and often about what it is we're trying to create, what is deepest in our hearts, and not just what we hate or what's simple.

A friend of mine recently came out to me as not being an anarchist. She said she thought people were inherently lazy, and I know I live in my own little bubble of denial in my head, but I can't believe that's true. I think so many of us work really hard in a world that is so against us. I've seen so many people work hard just to live. People doing the hard work of surviving incest, surviving rape, surviving partners who tell them they're shit, surviving being beaten, being ignored, being not believed. And if we are doing this hard work, there's got to be a deep desire in the rest of us.

Right now, I want you to think seriously about what kind of world you want, and how we can take steps to get there. I want us to talk with our friends about real things, and cut the bullshit. Like if you talk shit about women, what are the reasons behind it? What is the benefit for you? What do you think might be the actual real ways it hurts us? If you dismiss people who are trying to change the world, I want you to challenge your dismissal, and to think seriously about what it is you don't like about their ideas or tactics, and what it is you think should be done differently, and how can you work to make that happen.

It's time to work hard. I want to uncover our secrets and our lost abilities. I want us to stop making fun of each other. I want us to feel deeply, and to love, and grow to trust our bodies, and figure out the people we can depend on and who is trying to trick us.

I want us to stop worrying so much about whether or not we feel like we belong, stop trying to prove ourselves. Nothing is comfortable in this world even if we can find bits and pieces of it, bits and pieces of community. I want us to be able to agree to disagree on things. I want us to encourage a diversity of identities and of tactics. I want us to study. There is an embarrassing lack of political knowledge and shallow political rhetoric that doesn't sustain us. I want us to embrace challenge, and to fight for what we believe, and to stand up for each other, to learn how to live in different worlds. I want to sew it all together, the ways we fight and create and think, not a single thread all mashed together in fake unity, but a net of identity, culture, resistance, community, and family, to catch the ones who are falling. To break their fall.

At the Black Bear, Butcher Wolf, Red Herring show, Chris Somerville from Black Bear says into the microphone, "This song is about the problems that arise when people are divided from the natural world." and if the basement had been packed and the amps had been louder, the force of the music could have pushed us all together and the violin bow, as a needle, could have sewn up the divisions and the revolution would have streamed out through everything. As it was, I could only stand there with my hand on my heart, trying to hold it in.

## don't try

### by dave

I found out a few weeks ago that this famous chef has the same sort of cancer that I had. Normally that wouldn't be so weird except we're talking about cancer of the tongue here. Yes, there is such a thing. I really didn't think it could get more tragic than what happened to me, but they really did it with this guy. A chef. A guy whose whole life is food.

He has no idea what he's in for either. His cancer is more advanced than mine was, and he's basically going through a nearly identical treatment regimen. That shit left me ruined in ways I won't even try to explain because it's hard for a healthy, normal person to even wrap their naïve little brain

around that kind of oddball damage.

It's strange to hear the guy talking about how he's going to keep working through treatment. Apparently his restaurant in Chicago is one of the most famous in the country. You see, it's tragic because in a best-case scenario this dude is going to lose much of his ability to taste food. In a significantly worse case scenario he'll lose his ability to eat food completely (and much of his ability to speak as well). The worst case of course is death, which at his staging isn't uncommon. And he seems to have no idea—like it's just business as usual while he goes through this minor setback. Total PR.

I thought that too. Figured I'd be in and out of the whole situation in a month or two. Instead it was nearly a year out of my life that completely ruined my health and altered me physically forever. And recovery is just as difficult and takes years. I'm still recovering. And won't ever fully. That's not even to speak of the mental anguish and permanent outcast status you achieve.

So I guess my point is, cancer of any kind ain't no joke, folks. But when it's rare, it's arguably worse because nobody pays attention to it, there's no fundraisers, no cute little bracelets to wear, no celeb-endorsements or PR campaigns. It's just you and the system and whatever's left of you after it's done. It's real firkin' life, a kind you've never lived. Try to remember that when you're busy whining about how your boss made you do this or that, or it's so horrible that some show cost you ten bucks. Once your health goes, most other shit seems insignificant in comparison.

And with that, we charge forth to ruin…

We lead this month with two releases from the consistently great Profound Lore label. The first of which, Cobalt's *Eater of Birds* album, is a contender for top album of 2007. Cobalt was previously unknown to me, and I have no idea how they managed to pass under my radar. If given the chance, I would have released this record myself. Cobalt hails from Fort Collins, Colorado, and currently consists of just two members.

*Eater of Birds* is a 70-minute epic that never gets boring and in fact seems over too soon—how many bands can say that about their 70-minute snoozefest? Stylistically, it's a mash up of Destroyer 666's war-metal blasphemy, Carpathian Forest's blackened Motorhead steamroller and, of all things, AmRep-style repetitive heavy noise rock. Strange formula, but one that works perfectly for Cobalt.

In the case of several tracks—opener "When Serpents Return," "Ulcerism," and "Blood Eagle Sacrifice"—Cobalt starts on the blackened speed tip and then segues to a layered noise rock break that builds and builds until it's a crashing wall of huge drums and repeated, sped-up (good) Neurosis riffs that lay waste like a jackhammer to a concrete slab. And the best part is, the riffs are memorable and catchy as fuck. You'll break your neck to some of this stuff.

There are three different tracks that divide the album up into sections, all called "Ritual Use Of Fire," in which Cobalt is free to explore noisy landscapes, acoustic flourishes, and creepy heavy breathing. Even Jarboe lends her pipes on a few of these. They are just slightly longer than they need to be, but they do provide a nice respite from the beating you take on the main tracks.

The more I listen to *Eater of Birds*, the more I love it—and the best part is, it was a total surprise. I had zero expectation going in, and was for some reason expecting something much more syrupy and wimpy. Cobalt also has another earlier record out called simply *War Metal*, which was released by Displeased. I'm tracking that down as I write this. Do whatever you need to do to get this one.

Profound Lore also gives us a new album from France's Alcest, *Souvenirs D'un Autre Monde*. Sounds very romantic and French, doesn't it? Alcest is not really metal at all, but that's not necessarily a bad thing, as certain metal types will get into this—particularly those into mellow gothic doom and also newer shoegaze-inspired type shit—two genres I typically detest. With all the bands trudging the My Bloody Valentine waters these days, it's nice to hear something that's not just a heavy-metal bastardization of the sound, but more like a forward-thinking, only somewhat obvious tribute. The mistake of adding in crushing post-rock crescendos is avoided in favor of keeping a purity and innocence (a word used often in describing Alcest) about the music. Where MBV felt sexy and drug-hazed, Alcest has a child-like sentimentality that predates those feelings. Only the slightest embryonic gleam of main man Neige's black metal side (he does the killer Peste Noire) ever creeps in—you could imagine some of the passages on a track like "Sur L'autre Rive Je T'attendrai" being rearranged in that context. If you feel like a total simp for listening to the new Jesu album—which you should—pick up *Souvenirs D'un Autre Monde*, a far better proposition for the new wave of white light-inspired unmetal.

Bloodhorse is a new band with a new release on the Translation Loss label titled EP. Although it's called an EP, this is actually about 35 minutes long. This is "stoner rock" played by ex-hardcore people from bands like 454 Big Block, Shelter, and even Saves The Day (!?). And with that in mind, it's hard not to see this as a bunch of dudes making inroads into a genre that they have not been involved with long. These songs, for the most part, are bland and rudimentary, utilizing the same riffs that third-division stoner bands have been plying for more than ten years. I mean, why not just listen to the first Fu Manchu record instead? There's more iommijuice in one Al Cisneros bass line then there is on this entire record. It'll take another album, or even two, for this band to really find their feet, I imagine.

Today is the Day has a new one out called *Axis Of Eden*. Been a while since I rocked anything by TITD so this one came as kind of a surprise. Got to admit, I think Mr. Austin has lost a step or two over the years. The drum sound on this one is ridiculously bad—the double bass patterns are total typewriter worship. The heaviest parts of this record come off as a more death-metal sounding Ministry, but with worse production. I wanted to like this record. I have a lot of respect for Steve Austin. Couldn't make it happen, though. I'll stick with the AmRep stuff. *Axis Of Eden* was self-released on Austin's Supernova Records.

Also on Austin's Supernova imprint is Defcon 4, playing angry, noisy post-punk/metal with a vocalist who sounds a helluva lot like Sam McPheeters—a good thing. No surprise that Born Against is listed as an influence on their web page. The 22-minute album is divided into four "acts," with each act having several different tracks. Those into Unsane might also dig some of what's going on here. There are some grindy moments thrown in as well—they cover a lot of ground in a short time. They'll be touring with Today is the Day, and I imagine they rage live. I don't like their band name, but I do like the music—even if it makes me want to listen to Born Against instead. Strangely, when I popped this into my computer, it came up as Rage Against The Machine's "Fuck Tha Police."

Dipping into the vaults of obscurity again, as I did last month, we have to look back on the Gehenna album *Seen Through the Veils of Darkness*, originally released on the Cacophonous label in the mid-'90s. Norway's Gehenna is a black metal band, not to be confused with the American band of the same name.

Gehenna has gone through a few stylistic changes during their many albums. The first few albums were early Norse-style black metal that incorporated moody synth patterns. Fans of this style often prefer the previous album, *First Spell*, but both this album and the next one, *Malice*—which started into a more aggressive direction—are worth checking out as well.

*Seen Through the Veils…* has a great *Lord of the Flies* beginning with a creepy, demented

intro and blasts into a Euronymous-style riff. Then it turns to a slower pace, and eventually a killer '80s-inspired Venom-style riff. There's weird chanting going on in certain parts as well.

"A Witch Is Born" is kind of a haunted, memorable tune that incorporates mid-paced riffery with buried samples of a witch actually being born. The synth sounds are ever present, and really, synth has only sounded OK on a few black metal records, but this one managed to pull it off without getting too much into Dimmu Borgir-style carnival theatrics.

A personal favorite track is the nearly nine-minute "A Myth..." which infuses some jangly death rock guitar parts that almost sound poppy in the context of a black metal record.

As I mentioned, Gehenna followed up *Seen Through The Veils...* with *Malice,* which was the close of the first chapter in their history. They bounced back a few years later, I suppose around 1998, with the relentless onslaught of *Adimiron Black,* an album that still stands as an all-time favorite. *Adimiron Black* left behind any shred remaining of gothic whimsy and synth-based romanticism in favor of full-on aggression. Basically, it's a combination of Slayer's *South Of Heaven,* but much faster and almost death metal in its application of the black metal paradigm.

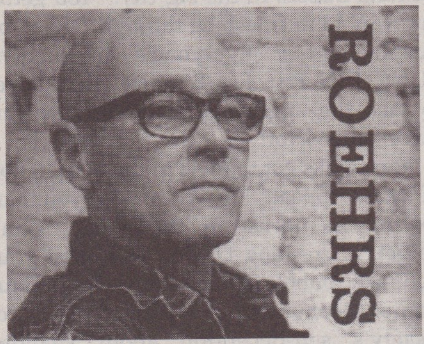
Opener "The Killing Kind" is total Slayer worship, but thankfully incorporates blast beats and far more brutal vocals, while it maintains Slayerness with catchy hooks and killer choruses. It's followed by "Deadlights," a nuclear-inspired tune that is just total fury in motion. A non-stop barrage of totalitarian riffing that actually sounds like a prelude to a bombraid set to music. "Devil's Work" is a dead ringer for Obituary's doomed death classic "Slowly We Rot." Brilliant.

After *Adimiron Black,* Gehenna followed it up with *Murder* which was even more Slayer-esque, yet lacked the punishing death vibe of its predecessor. After that Gehenna disappeared for years until they remerged a few years back with one member left, and recorded a return to black metal in the form of the somewhat lukewarm *WW.* Nonetheless, most of Gehenna's catalog is well worth checking out, with *Seen Through The Veils Of Darkness* and *Adimiron Black,* released by Moonfog, ranking highest.

Sticking with Norwegian obscurity, we get to an album I continue to return to over and over: Hades' *The Dawn of a Dying Sun,* released by Full Moon Productions. This is Viking metal, but not the cheesy shit you hear nowadays. No—this is epic Bathory worship (think middle period) with some buried Bolt Thrower ugliness here and there. Everything is mid-paced or slower, and the guitars are awash in distorted buzz, making this noisy as hell. Riffs draw on the folk influence of the band's home country, yet managing to stay heavy as shit without wimping out. The ten-minute "Alone Walkyng" and album opener "Awakening of Kings" could be called standout tracks that best exemplify the Hades style. The low-key Tolkien-inspired "The Red Sun Mocks My Sadness" brings things down a notch with just a sullen flute melody and synth backbone.

Hades would go on to record another few albums, but didn't ever seem to recapture the grandeur and brilliance of *The Dawn of a Dying Sun.* Anyone into epic Bathory worship, and I'd venture even those into retro-metalcrust like Stormcrow and Sanctum, would find something to like here.

That's it for this month. *Don't Try* will be on hiatus next month as I'll be in the process of moving away. I'll be back the following month with more metal for your ma's kettle. Should have a new contact address by then too.




**"At War With Everybody"**

Fuck! Hordes of riotous hardcore warriors from back east came out here to pillage and plunder! Brandon and the "No Way" punk militia swept through California leaving shredded eardrums and damaged skulls! The fans were smiling like mischievous delinquents as they were consumed by a thrashy mess of a pit!

WASTED TIME and GOVERNMENT WARNING were the evil culprits stirring up the cauldron of bad behavior! The two Bay Area shows were on school/work nights; a Monday and a Sunday. It did not matter! The rabid fans went off hard! WASTED TIME played first. Brandon's psychotic drumming nailed down the bottom end and Mark sang as if his life depended on it! Brutish, violent, guitar and bass playing overwhelmed the punks and skins! The pit was unadulterated mayhem!! The horrible maw beckoned the punk rockers to come in—there was no guarantee of escape! They ran in happily! At the final reckoning all the punks and skins emerged happier than a dog with two dicks!

The award for Punk Rock Guts and Glory goes to Brandon who drummed for all three headliners on the show in San Francisco. That was a superhuman task! In the same brilliant performance Eric played bass in WASTED TIME and then played fucking over-the-top scorching guitar in GOVERNMENT WARNING! Both men displayed awe-inspiring rock n' roll stamina! Fuck yes!

For their set at Thee Parkside, WASTED TIME included: "Hostage," "Enemies," "Stranger," "Leech," "No Shore," "Wolf," "Hey Pat," "And So It Goes," and "Hype." His set was a fucking crusher! The punks were stunned!

GOVERNMENT WARNING picked up the hardcore gauntlet and charged into: "No Mod," "Fat," "Trend," "Railed," "Blank," "RKL," "Arrested," "Jocks and Cops," and "Government Warning." Fuck! What a set!

The punks and skins came fucking unhinged! Mistakes were made! It was great! WASTED TIME and GOVERNMENT WARNING wreaked havoc from Bakersfield to Isla Vista and returned to the Bay Area on the following Sunday to play an earthshaking show at Gilman Street in Berkeley. This was the final show of the tour and these ornery fuckers came to destroy Gilman!

Local hardcore favorites, NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE opened up an afternoon of no-holds-barred hardcore music! In a very short period of time, NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE has established themselves as a consistent powerhouse of raw thrash songs that ring true for punks and skins both young and old. NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE clobbered the kids with "Smalltown Drama," "Sick and Tired," "My Reality," "Better Off," "Hypocrite," "No Trust," "Domestic Dispute," "Paranoid," "Tension," and their great self-titled anthem, "Nightstick Justice." A number of these tunes are available on the fine NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE EP. We will look forward to new product from these Bay Area thrashers in the near future. Be sure to go see NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE when they play your town!

After the strong set by NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE, WASTED TIME was fully prepared to kick some punk butt! That is precisely what happened! Mark, Brandon, and company came to the stage as a fully formed hardcore beast! WASTED TIME went for the throat immediately with vicious songs such as "Shameless" into "Ritual" into "And So It Goes," ferocious versions of "Wolf," "Hey Pat," and "Enemies." WASTED TIME didn't let you up for air! The band devastated the crowd with "We're Done For" into "Hype" and then, "Hostage." Fuck! What an amaz-

ing set! The punks and skins went fucking berserk!

GOVERNMENT WARNING annihilated anybody left standing with "Jocks and Cops," "Cutting Room Floor," "Arrested," "Railroaded," "Fat," "Trend," "Self-Destruction," "Government Warning" and "No Mod." Fucking unbelievable!

You will not get to see two punk bands with this uncanny display of bare-wires punk harnessed to an insatiable hunger for blood! This fucking life-changing hardcore currency could only come from the East coast.

Tobia and LOOK BACK AND LAUGH offered the final chapter in this "No Shore" hardcore bash! Excellent music was provided from start to finish! The camaraderie exhibited was unique and very important to all involved. Thanks go out to all the people whose hard work made the "No Shore" tour happen! Special thank yous to Yannick and Feral Ward Records, and Brandon and Lauren of No Way Records.

Grave Mistake Records never rests! This month you get a second press of the crazed hardcore rant of Mr. Parsons and his cohorts in TIME TO ESCAPE. The reissue of the self-titled, *Time to Escape* EP from 2006 is welcomed by punks and skins who did not get this limited record the first time out.

These hard-edged punk tunes were recorded on October 2nd 2005, and they sound as urgent as ever! Side A splits your head open with the bleak and venomous "Mr. Popular." This song is about those "cool" egotistical fucks that try to inhabit the scene. Song two is "Wasted Time," about the futility of studying in college for four years just to be trapped in a forty-year cycle of unfulfilling work as a drone. The third song on side A is pure punk bile! "Blood's Not Thick Enough" has massive truckloads of hate directed at one person. Read this indictment: "You will never be welcome here / You have ruined too many amazing lives / With your actions come responsibility / That's something you never learned / Now you fucked up one too many times / And now you're dead to me." Brutal! Side B offers two more punk numbers. "Party Time" leads into "Run Away"—hold on for dear life! This manic hardcore crusher splits your head wide open! The unsettling punk biography speaks of the inescapable life trap that lurks right beyond the pale. "Run / I don't fucking need this place / No / they never cared anyway / Too many haunting memories / Torch it all—burn my past." This tune has a masterful roller coaster of slow disturbing guitar chugs combined with insane vocals—all hardcore- all desperate!

For permission to cut tracks like "Blood's Not Thick Enough" and "Run Away," TIME TO ESCAPE had to negotiate a pact with Lucifer's minions. You fucks better pay attention! Get this now! Contact: Grave Mistake Records, PO Box 12482,Richmond, VA 23241, gravemistakerecords@gmail.com.

Fuck yes! Martin Sorrondeguy and his Lengua Armada Record Label has fucking dumped a forty-megaton A-Bomb on you hapless punks! The new *At War With Everybody* 12" by PUNCH IN THE FACE will tilt your world on its axis! This is raw, barbed-wire punk harboring unsavory designs on your brain! No melodic pop crap will appear on this evil slab of vinyl!

These dark and threatening punks start the full-frontal assault immediately with "Never Follow." Fuck! PUNCH IN THE FACE rails, "I wanna tear your world down / Bring you to your knees." That's hard shit!

"Hollow" continues the scathing assessment of the corporate pigs: "Win at whatever cost / You'll never realize you already lost / Got all your trophies / All you really are is hollow inside." Yes!

The third song is the title cut, "At War with Everybody." This tune captures the discomfort of pushing and shoving with the teeming masses in the big city: "You get in my way / I'm smashing through / Keep on pushing me / Everyone's an enemy." PUNCH IN THE FACE utilizes their anger to take the aggressive stance of the survivor—the victor!

You punks get to revel in the humiliation of "Mass Appeal." You will stew in your harrowing memories in the song, "Can't Forget." "Crashing Down" will burst your optimistic bubble about a shiny and glorious future. "Monument to Nothing" speaks of society's self-deception about shallow, meaningless accomplishments. The song, "Who's Gonna Take the Weight" will frighten punks who are coming to terms with their failure to achieve their youthful dreams. "Things change as we get older / Sometimes we become what we hate." We smash through "Dead Inside" and "Loudmouth" and get "Reap What You Sow" with this poignant warning: "You go through life not caring what you do / Fucking over everybody / Trying to take it all / It's coming back / You're gonna fall." Yes!

PUNCH IN THE FACE demonstrates once again that they are one of the most formidable weapons in Lengua Armada's arsenal!!! Order this 12" right now!

Heads up! Durty Mick Records from Torrance, California has unleashed some mad-dog skinhead hardcore on your sorry ass! The band is SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN and the CD is entitled *Laid to Waste*. The new product from these Floridians digs deep into the NY hardcore/AGNOSTIC FRONT recipe book.

On the fast numbers, SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN rips your chest open with untempered anger! Song two, "Altered Reality" gathers power and becomes a pair of seething jaws. Song four, "Age of Destruction" keeps building and building, finally developing the strength of a true east-coast hardcore threat. Another tune that will grab you right away is song number seven. "A Better Life" is a fine hardcore tune with lots of hooks. Right on the heels of "A Better Life," comes "Dumbed Down" with a roiling guitar attack and lightning quick momentum. This is good shit!

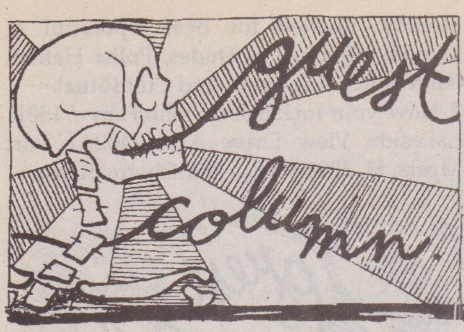
Song number ten is called "Sink or Swim" with great music and thought-provoking lyrics asking who will rise out of the crisis to fulfill the promise and the potential each person has. The last tune is "Living Wage" about how unskilled laborers who do the grunt work in this country cannot escape the gnawing poverty of capitalism's vicious cycle. On the *Laid to Waste* CD SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN presents strong hardcore with smart lyrics about life in working-class America. Order your copy today from Durty Mick Records, 19106 S Normandie Ave, PO Box 311, Torrance, CA 90502.

Attention hardcore punks and skins! A split CD entitled *East Meets West* has reared its nasty head again! FED UP from New York and DISAVOW from Illinois have executed a surgical strike on you knuckleheads! This is balls-out hardcore inspired by CRO MAGS, MADBALL, AGNOSTIC FRONT and their ilk. This music demands your undivided attention! As soon as you put this CD on, you will find that you are standing up with your boots laced, ready for action! FED UP leads the foray into danger with their powerful opener "Brutal Takeover." This raw hardcore starts off menacing and quickly accelerates to deadly strength! Fuck!

Song number two by FED UP is "Drunken Violence." This song comes straight at your face with FED UP dropping radioactive ordinance on you with no mercy! These hardcore stalwarts crash through "Bodacious Tatas" and "Snitch Bitch" and leave you fucking happy and beaten! DISAVOW takes up the hardcore banner next and crunch your skull like a melon! DISAVOW powers through "So Few Bullets," "Your Turn," "By the Numbers," and finish you off with "No More Heroes." Great!

This CD gives you two of America's top-shelf hardcore bands in a nice little package. Order the *East Meets West* split CD featuring FED UP and DISAVOW. Contact NGS Records, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL 60559; NGSRecords.com.

Until next month—see you fucks at the bar.




## NO OTHER FUCKING ALTERNATIVE

John Fahy

I was at the airport the other day and I flipped through a copy of *SPIN* at the newsstand after seeing that there was a feature on Against Me! in it. I was waiting for the interviewer to stop with the required fluff writing about their practice space being dirty (keep that punk credibility!) and jerking them off about their new album on major label Sire, before he finally got to the softball questions about the punk community from which Against Me! came being pissed that the band completely fucking sold out to the corporate mainstream after using our alternative DIY system for ten years. Tom Gabel said something along the lines of, "I understand the hypocrisy in that, but if we really want to create an alternative to the mainstream, you have to recognize there is a financial reality to that."

Did you ever notice that when people are trying to wriggle out of admitting they did something morally repugnant, they always bring up "realism," and needing to be a "realist"? Never mind that earlier shit Tom had been riding in the punk scene—the idea of being "An Anarchist, Baby," and smashing Starbucks windows (would Against Me! not fit in really well on one of those Starbucks compilation CDs with other folk sellouts?). Five years earlier, Tom was claiming to be an idealist instead of a "realist." He took that idea and ran with it until it created enough hype to break through the mall-*SPIN*-MTV barrier, then "realism" kicked in. Is this guy still deluding himself that he is still a part of any kind of alternative? Or is he just trying to delude us? We really should have realized where this was going when that first big Against Me! album was titled "Reinventing Axl Rose." Punk is not about reinventing rock stars. It is about murdering them. Maybe Against Me! meant "reinvent" as "becoming a rock star without catching any shit for it from punks." They are at least partially successful, if that was their goal. Many in the punk scene seem to be very understanding toward Against Me!'s betrayal. Someone from a DIY hardcore band I really respect and admire was said to me, "Well, you have to look at it like, the guy has a baby to feed." This excuse is pathetic. That baby can be fed by a million other things that aren't as disgraceful. You can sell out yourself personally, like taking a job or money from a shady corporation, and that is sad, really. But it's a whole new level of nauseating deceit to sell out yourself, your ideas, your music, and the spirit of your community to capitalism when every one of those things used to be completely in opposition to the system of profit over people. The milder, easy-to-please punk scene is more forgiving because, honestly, punks have already forgiven too many transgressions by supposed "independents," and see this as just another small step in the wrong direction, instead of the culmination of the corporate intrusion into punk and hardcore. Decrepit, corporate-linked shit is already taking place in our supposed underground, such as Pabst Blue Ribbon's sponsorship of No Idea's "The Fest," or the mass migration of punks to MySpace.com.

In an old Ben Weasel column (June 1994), titled "Punk & Profit Margins," Ben wrote about punks in bands that "really believe in their own ethics but aren't stupid or naïve enough to think that playing $5 gigs in VFW halls is going to be satisfying for them in another five years." This is ultimately the kind of logic that led to Ben writing his column (one of his last before his sacking by Tim Yo) about how he was taking the Riverdales on tour with fuckface sellouts Green Day in stadiums across America, and he would like to be the punk "insider" in a mainstream concert tour, reporting back to *MRR* and the punks. Ben overlooked that Tim and the readership of *MRR* didn't want anything to do with a mainstream rock tour. Only Ben did. It showed what Ben in the same column called "the tell-tale signs of jumping ship." It also indicated Ben was using the "insider" excuse as a way of staying in with the punk community while he flirted heavily with selling out. Ben was extremely jaded about the DIY community at the time and nothing ever being independent enough for his band—another sign of or excuse to sell out. When I read this Green Day Tour column, I think in the October or November issue of 1995, I was shocked and let down. Ben had previously written the independent music manifesto that was inside the jacket of Screeching Weasel's *Wiggle* album, which was a fierce rebuke to the mainstream corporate music scene, and now he was about to jump aboard it. Ben's ego wasn't satisfied by playing $5 shows anymore, but he wanted to keep the comfort and acceptance of the punk community, like Tom Gabel does.

Whether it's Ben Weasel, Against Me!, or Jawbreaker, the sellout or potential sellout will blame the scene that supported them for withdrawing their support. This support is often withdrawn in the first place because punks see the writing on the wall. Every fucking sellout uses this excuse to say, "Well, they think we sold out already, we might as well go ahead and do it." None of these bands ever want to prove the punks wrong and show that they're committed to the community they came from, our alternative to the mainstream.

Another strategy in sellout-excusery is to say that fame swallowed you. The punk scene can no longer contain your "hugeness." But punks know that everyone has a choice. Jawbreaker was huge, for sure. They wrote great songs with great lyrics and they could have stayed on great independent labels. They chose not to. They chose money and big concerts and big labels and opening for Nirvana. They made that choice. A band like Minor Threat has sold hundreds of thousands of records. But Minor Threat did this on their own label, on their own terms. They're millionaires, or should be (I suspect most of the money has gone to putting out everything they've done since on Dischord). They still have their boring non-hype ads for their independent bands on their independent label. Minor Threat and Dischord are huge, bigger than most of these horseshit sellouts will ever be, and they've done it on their own terms. I don't think they ever asked for it, or ever wanted it. They never tried to get international attention but it exists because it was real, and raw. And because they never gave a portion to a major corporation, they made millions of dollars, ethically. How about that financial reality?

$5 shows, VFW halls, independent labels, distros, zines. This is our fucking alternative. You accept it or you don't. You accept that the financial reality is bleak because it's supposed to be. It's how we provide a real alternative for people who are disillusioned with everything else. People will turn up anywhere when money is involved. When money is scarce and people turn up it means they need something else. You can't go halfway into the mainstream and stay halfway here. We're here in the first place because we want nothing to do with that life, hype, and money. If anyone thinks this is an uninspiring ghetto, I welcome them to fuck off immediately and not waste our time. I hope they enjoy the dizzying glamour of nightclubs, bouncers, public relations, major label fuckovers, and VH1.

Inspiration is a fine thing for Ben Weasel to complain about a lack of. He was friends with Tim Yo, who founded *Maximum Rocknroll* and the Gilman Street Project. A lot has been written in the last few issues about

Tim Yo, and I never met or knew him but I definitely admired the guy. I, like a lot of other punks, thought Tim's words and actions were hypocritical at times, but Tim took on all that criticism and printed it because he knew accountability to each other was important. Tim Yo was criticized for selling the zine at Tower Records. He at least didn't pretend he was innocent of those things. He helped to revolutionize punk in the US. He was a huge influence on the punk scene's awareness and appreciation of international punk through *MRR* and the *MRR* radio show. The Gilman Street Project became a mainstay of the Bay Area and a classic example of another massive project by punks for punks. It also became the center of a scene that springboarded a lot of bands who later sold out. Tim called them all out. He also called out people who were or used to be good friends of his when he thought they were doing shady shit, like Jello Biafra, Larry Livermore, and Ben Weasel. I would find it hard to believe that Tim's, and some of those other characters' egos weren't a part of those rifts too, but the arguments were still about ethics, honesty, and decency. Tim was interested in being militantly independent, open, and honest in business dealings, and thought nobody should accept any less. Tim will be dead a decade before long, and the way he affected DIY hardcore will still be felt.

What's inspiring beyond Tim's actions or contributions were his ideas. Tim was interested in how far the independent scene could be taken. How far can the punk scene be taken? And by far, that meant always in the opposite direction of the corporate mainstream that grows more suffocating all the time. Tim was interested in creating strong, collectively minded alternatives in which we can support each other so we don't need anything from anyone else. This is clearly illustrated by the stories Martin Sprouse told about Tim giving money to other zines with profit left over at the end of the year. Bob Suren, who I interviewed recently, is clearly thinking along the same lines, based on his projects. Bob runs an independent store, a distro, and a DIY punk/HC record label, Burrito Records. He also puts on shows in the back of the store, and plays in some of the local bands. He goes even further to put out a local zine called *Burn Brandon* that is free and written by Bob and local punks. He does a separate record label also called Burn Brandon that puts out records by local bands that are free of charge. He raises money for both with benefit shows at his store. He's involved with another project Frank Forever (after a deceased punk friend) that gets together money through various fundraising and gives it to local young punk bands for recording or equipment. He's been around for years doing this shit.

Bob is not alone in doing all of this, nor was Tim. What's important is they're both affected and driven by this concept of a real, substantial, ideal-driven alternative. What I'm interested in is who is going to take these ideas even further and put them into action? I think unfortunately we have to first stand up for ourselves and reverse the trend of corporate infiltration in the punk community, and speak up about everyone who is participating in it. Punk has become too socially safe for those cooperating with corporate business, or those who mimic their style. We have to exterminate this element from the punk scene. More importantly, we need to build up our alternative further, and that is a challenge that is inspiring.

If you don't find inspiration here, you're not really looking, and maybe you never were. You were just an empty vessel with a temporary circle-A tattoo who always was thinking about money in the long run. Die.

ENDNOTES:

1. Check out these zines, they are two of my favorites and done by friends of mine:
*Seven Inches to Freedom* – Total devotion to punk and hardcore records. My friend Joe writes this and takes submissions! He has four issues out, and number five coming up soon. Check it out and then write something about punk and HC shit you love for it. Send $1 for postage or trade to Joe Lachut / 2163 Hoople Street / Fort Myers, FL 33912.
*Mixtapers Do It Better* – Dedicated to the art of mixtaping and love of mixtapes. My friend Karen writes this and it is an awesome read, full of good tips, and makes you want to trade tapes like crazy. Issue #2 just came out and rules! Send a buck for postage or trade to Karen Heeringa / 49 Winterhalder Dr. / Zeeland, MI 49464.
2. I am working on a couple of different zines right now, sort of, but the next I'll probably do is the second issue of my zine about horror movies, mostly focused on Italian gore stuff and various exploitation from the '70s/'80s. If you want to submit or have any ideas, write to me at the address below. I have just a few issues of the first zine that are available for a buck postage.
3. Check out my friend Nevin's label and distro - www.ifbrecords.com. Nevin gets a lot of good trades from internationals and buys used collections with a lot of gems you can find for cheap instead of on eBay. All the money goes to putting out more DIY records by DIY bands.
4. Don't support those boners at Drugged Conscience Records.
5. Jump off the MySpace.
6. Check out these awesome DIY hardcore/grind/punk bands if you haven't already: Loaded for Bear, Spoonful of Vicodin, Hombrinus Dudes, Polite Hatred, Andros Rex, Divisions, and Cult Ritual.
7. Have your fucking say: John Fahy / 15011 Lakeside View Drive Apt. 2402 / Fort Myers, FL 33919. fahy_john@hotmail.com

### GILMAN DILEMMA, OR, WHAT HAPPENED TO "NO RULES"?

Spencer Horne

I was looking at a flyer for a 924 Gilman show the other day when their "no racism/sexism/homophobia" footnote caught my eye. I had of course noticed it before (it's on most Gilman flyers) but this time, it really got me thinking...what the fuck does this really mean? Do they care that much about what you say there? Actually, I think they do. Can you get kicked out for saying *certain words*, or expressing ideas they don't like? If so, would Gilman really be doing any justice by banning slurs? Is it just a feeble attempt at some petty ideologically sovereign ideal through controlling what people say? This type of thinking is everywhere in the scene; I only use Gilman as an example to point this out. Also, I don't want it to seem that I don't appreciate Gilman, because I do. Still...

I really hate to have to say this, but I actually take my freedom of speech kinda seriously. In a world of fleeting civil liberties, it seems ridiculous that Gilman, a *punk club* for fuck's sake, not only restricts speech (for which you can be kicked out from the club) but has the audacity to even think they can police you like this in the first place.

And no, I'm not trying to justify the use of such slurs; my feelings on the subject are presumably synonymous with most anyone who is reading this magazine (I wholly realize that Gilman has good intentions). Slurs of such nature are degrading and socially inappropriate in just about any context. Whenever people of one race/gender/sexuality feel threatened by their perceived opposite, they react by using insults to justify, necessitate and reinforce their delusions of superiority. But deeper than the overt tasteless meaning behind the words themselves is the underlying purpose of this phenomena: slurs are a method of control—an illusionary control, but control none the

less—and it's this breed of control and the nonsense justification at its root that I oppose.

Notice above I used the word delusion. Just as those who employ slurs are delusional about the realities behind them, so is Gilman (or *anyone*) in thinking that they are stopping any social inequities by enforcing this bizarre rule. Positivity and optimism are good (I guess), but it's not always worth the ideological effort, especially when you could easily be selling yourself short.

People with strong opinions have a frequent tendency to commit the informal fallacy known as the "straw-man" argument (as Warkrime seems quick to point out among their otherwise hyper-sophist babble). In this case, it follows from the idea that these spoken slurs are a huge problem, and by banning them they have made the world a slightly freer place. In reality, this is of course not the case. The colloquial representations of oppressive thoughts may be banned, but the thoughts and behaviors behind them still exist all the same, even at Gilman. The straw man in this case serves to be nothing more than fodder for childish anarchist fantasies and is used to enforce a puerile rhetoric founded in a vacuous political dogmatism. Does Gilman have a list of objectionable words or topics? Who decides the protocol, some dweeb with kelp for brains? Are you not allowed to have racist/sexist/homophobic thoughts in the scene? *Oh shit!*

Many people (punks) I have spoken with throughout my life tend to justify this type of thinking with even more nonsense: Since the speakers of such slurs are presumably in the wrong (and desire control, see above), people feel it is logically sound and morally justifiable to in turn *control* the scope of the offenders behavior (as Gilman tries), thus nullifying or matching one wrong with another. This is of course an informal fallacy in its own right (a type of *tu quoque* [could also be seen as a false dilemma]) and requires the critical abilities of a bag of sand to avoid. Even if this ambiguous social inequity (racism/sexism/homophobia) was a certain truth (and not a straw man) the method of confronting it is questionable.

As you may have noticed, I've begun to stray away from Gilman here. I of course don't know how they would justify the apparent dilemma of their social criteria regardless, but I'm certainly curious to find out what they would say. Still, I think that this breed of ethical approach is indicative of an uncritically accepting attitude and overall crippling intellectual mediocrity that looms like a wet turd over the punk scene as much as it pollutes the overall nature of human agency and structures of being.

And of course this isn't unique to Gilman, this attitude is everywhere you look. I'm sorry I have to be the one to tell you this, but punk rock, and the radical politics it somehow begets, is subject to the same circular logic, social biases, credulous acceptance, and cognitive dissonance (if not more) any other socially conscious group, right-wing or left, displays. I won't even pretend it's easy to avoid doing this.

Why should I care about the presence and practice of casuist teenage ideologues? Well, false beliefs cause bad decision making; poor and faulty choices result from poor and faulty information. As rational beings who presumably want to improve our lives (and, presumably, those of others), or at the very least want to prevent our lives from getting any worse than they already are, we have a rational obligation to ourselves to increase the amount of true beliefs we have and reduce the amount of false beliefs in our cache of knowledge and ideas.

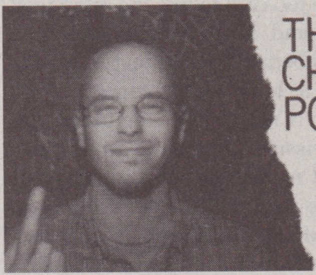
Obviously it's hard to choose to only consume true beliefs (otherwise we always would), so it comes down instead to our actual abilities of information consumption and bullshit filtration. The amount of true beliefs one has is increased with heuristic competence, absolution of biases/fallacies (like Gilman's social bias) and other shit like that. Poor reasoning affords poor absorption of beliefs and thus increases the probability of accepting false beliefs.

Why do I care about the false beliefs of another person? Well, I wouldn't care about the crap others fill their minds with except that the world of humanity is the product of our collective ideas, and the world of ideas is a totality of facts. False facts (beliefs) are septic ideas, and if dealing with other people's ideas is inevitable (in that all the constructs of society [material and ideological] are its product), then the poor choices made by others directly affects me. If this society is created by imbeciles, as I'm afraid most of us ultimately are, we all in turn suffer, but specifically *I* suffer. But this back and fourth dichotomous nature of false beliefs and shitty thought processes on my behalf in turn burdens everyone.

Gilman's bastardized child of objective and obligatory ethical reasoning, their anti-racist/sexist/homophobic agenda stemming from *duty*, is instead a testament to the suggestion that, while the flaws of a more subjective ethical approach may be avoided, the duty-based reasoning for which it is traded contains the burdens of intellectual conformity (and utter mediocrity). What I'm trying to say is that the creation of and insistence upon rules has its benefits and downfalls. Thus the rules of Gilman (as approximate representations of their beliefs) are indicative (at least to me) of a flawed ethical reasoning process, and a subsequent increased probability of a false belief acceptance that in turn hinders good decision making (and is formed from false beliefs to begin with!). The cycle repeats itself *ad infinitum*.

People naturally want to preserve the beliefs they have and like having, even if it means persisting to hold irrational beliefs. People don't like to admit that they may be wrong, so they purposely close themselves off from sources of information that may be contrary to their dear beliefs. It's hard to avoid doing this, I admit it, but I must point out that this rationale is the foundation of rules like "no racism/sexism/homophobia." If things like *Slingshot* are your only source of news, you'll inevitably conform to their version of the truth and live life with a skewed vision of society no matter how opened minded this actually may seem. How could you possibly gain from closing your mind like this? I genuinely believe that Gilman's rule is the product of a closed mind, and this closed mind produces and is the product of false beliefs.

If you think I'm full of shit, let me know, please.



## THREE CHORD POLITICS

**chris hubbard**

### MAJOR LIFE CHANGES

I've kinda got a special place in my heart for the Los Angeles band X. Although I first heard them on this funny Time/Life *History of Rock 'n' Roll* documentary video* that my uncle gave me 'cause it had Nirvana on it, my real exposure to X was in a high school film class. I took the class for two reasons: 1) There was no real "work" besides watching films and making student movies, and 2) The teacher was cool and was into punk in the '80s (one of the two former punks at the school, the other being the school nurse who had seen the Dead Boys in the '70s; she gave my best friend an awesome old Sid Vicious pin that said "I'm a Mess"). Anyway, this teacher had a policy of playing music before the class started, and one of the bands he liked to play was X. Not only was this a good introduction to a great band, it also meant I could look cool to the handful of other kids at my school getting into punk 'cause I could front like I knew all about this "classic band" before they did.

I picked up a CD with the first two LPs pretty early on, but was naturally suspicious

of their stuff on Elektra; I just assumed it sucked. That one scene in *X: The Unheard Music* where John Doe is writing the song "Real Child of Hell" changed my mind real quick. Even their fourth LP is fairly solid, and I like the Knitters LP well enough too.

Around this time I became aware of the existence of the Australian band X. Hearing good things, I picked up a reissue of their first LP, *Aspirations*. I thought it was pretty good, but the liner notes pissed me off:

*In North America, the Australian band X is often spoken of in reference to the better-known band from Los Angeles with the same name. Quite frequently, you're likely to hear people say something along the lines of, "Once you hear the Australian band, you'll forget all about the Los Angeles band." That's not really fair. It's like comparing Tiny Tim to the Stooges. Both have their merit, their strengths and weaknesses. I'm sure someone out there who, after hearing both the Los Angeles band and the Australian band, still prefers the Los* Angeles band. Somewhere, maybe…*

What the fuck? Surely they must be joking. It's gotta be an instance of record collector snobs who are too cool to like the more well-known band and instead claim the more obscure one is better. They're just in denial.

I sold off a bunch of records when I moved from NYC to SF, including the *Aspirations* reissue. It wasn't until fairly recently that I realized what a mistake this was. For some reason, I started pulling out the record at *MRR* and listening to it when I was working. Damn, it was better than I remembered. Way better… The notion that the author of those liner notes might not have been faking it started to seem a bit more plausible.

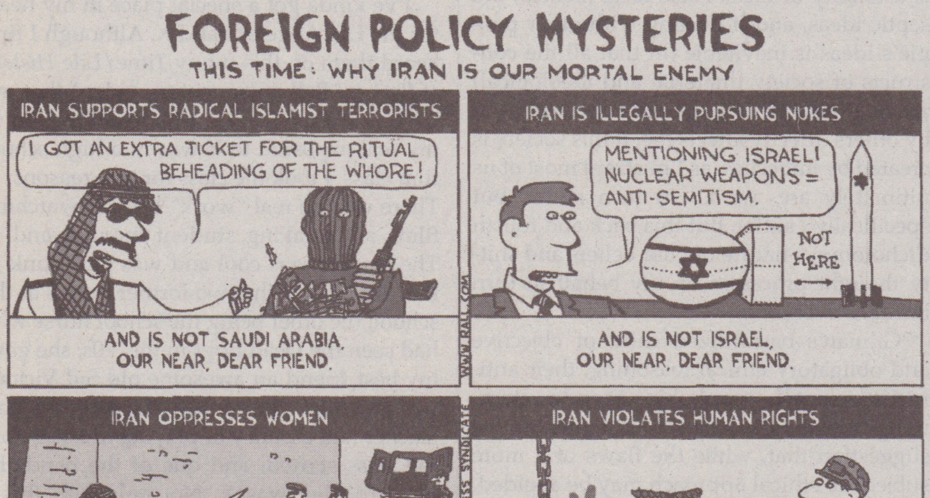
My appreciation for the record continued to grow when I found a used copy of the reissue for $6 (I would've paid much more!). It was so great—desperate, intense, jagged, sarcastic, disaffected, so unique sounding and so much attitude. It finally hit me…fuck, the Australian X *is* better than the Los Angeles X! Who'd have believed it? Definitely not me, for all those years.

Don't get me wrong, X from LA are a great band, but in the sense that they're a great *rock* band—they've got good songs, they're catchy, etc. X from Australia is a great band, but so much more *punk* than their counterparts from the States, so much more exciting and dangerous. I suppose it is kinda unfair to pit two band against each other just because they have the same name…but inevitable all the same. Next month: The Subhumans!

chris@maximumrocknroll.com

* * *

* The "Punk" episode of *The History of Rock 'n' Roll* did introduce me to a number of cool bands when I was just getting into punk. But it's pretty clueless as an overview of punk. Their timeline: The Stooges -> The Dolls -> CBGBs -> The Sex Pistols & The Clash -> Green Day. Apparently hardcore doesn't exist? Or punk outside of New York, LA, and London... The best/most ridiculous quote, from fucking Robert Plant (in case you didn't know, *not* an expert on punk): "What happened in America in 1991 was that you finally got punk of your own" (referring to Nirvana). Yikes!



# PEOPS

I GUESS I WAS THE FOUNDER OF AK PRESS - WHEN I WAS 13 I STUMBLED ACROSS PUNK ROCK & ANARCHISM - AT THAT POINT I LIVED IN A SMALL TOWN IN CENTRAL SCOTLAND CALLED STIRLING WHERE I GREW UP - THIS WAS ABOUT 1979 - HOW I CAME TO ANARCHISM I HAVE NO IDEA BUT AT AGE 13 I BOUGHT A CRASS T-SHIRT THAT SAID "ANARCHY PEACE & FREEDOM" - THATS WHY I BOUGHT IT - THEN I HAD TO BUY A CRASS RECORD TO AVOID SOCIAL EMBARRASSMENT - I THINK IT WAS STATIONS OF THE CRASS WHICH I ACTUALLY THOUGHT WAS PRETTY CRAP - I LIKED THE IDEAS & ENERGY BUT NOT THE MUSIC - FROM THERE I LAUNCHED MYSELF INTO THE PUNK UNDERGROUND - THIS WAS PRE-INTERNET SO I WAS A BIG LETTER WRITER & I WAS IN BANDS & AT AN EARLY AGE I STARTED SELLING FANZINES - IN THOSE EARLY DAYS ZINES WERE STILL PRETTY NOVEL - ESPECIALLY IN CENTRAL RURAL SCOTLAND - IN MY EARLY ENTREPRENURAL/PROPAGANDISTIC DAYS I WAS WALKING AROUND WITH A PLASTIC BAG FULL OF FANZINES - THERE WAS A LOT OF POLITICAL IDEALISM & I WOULD WALK UP TO PEOPLE & SAY "DO YOU WANT TO BUY A FANZINE?" - THE TYPICAL RESPONSE WAS "WHATS A FANZINE?" - THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD FOR ME WAS IN 1982 AT A SQUATTED GIG PUT ON BY CRASS & THE APOSTLES I THINK & THEY ALL PLAYED AS WELL AS DIRT & CONFLICT & THE MOB - I WAS WANDERING AROUND WITH MY PLASTIC BAG FULL OF ZINES & THERE WAS ☆→

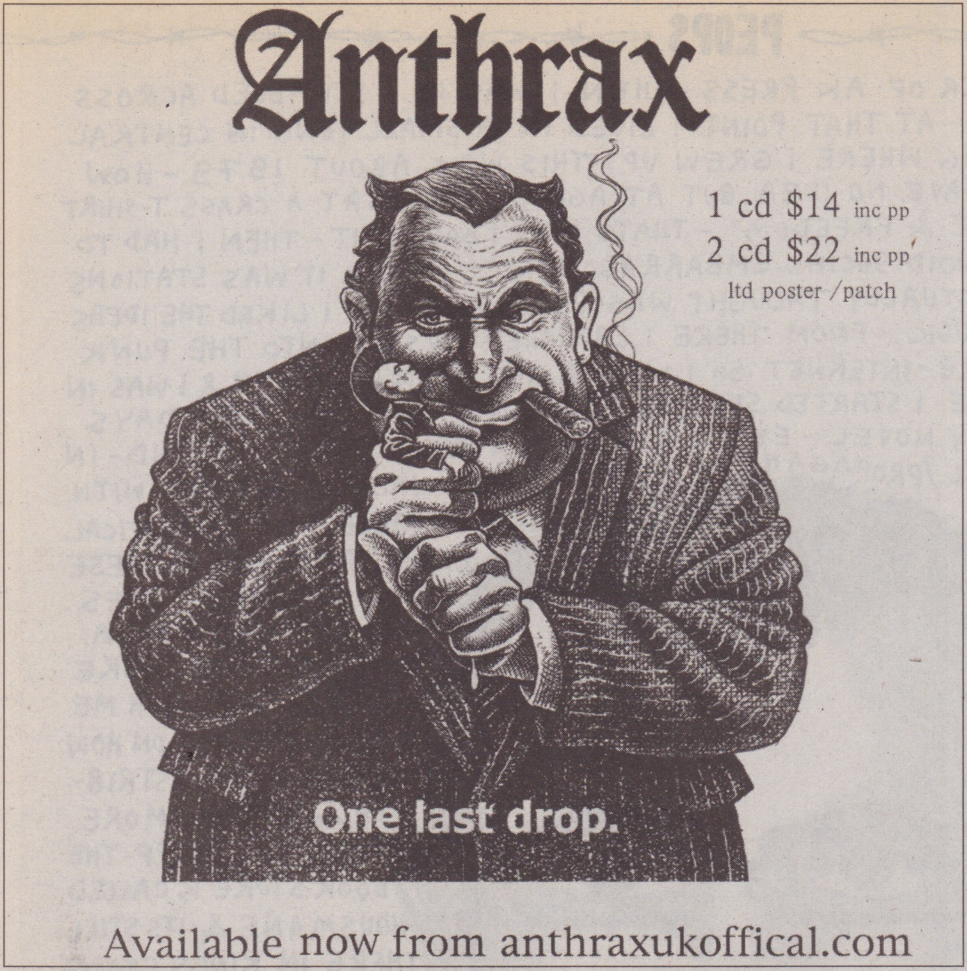
☆ - A TABLE FULL OF POLITICAL LITERATURE RUN BY THESE "OLD" BEARDED DUDES WHO WORKED FOR A POLITICAL BOOK STORE - THEY PUT UP WITH ME & MENTORED ME ON HOW TO PUBLISH & DISTRIBUTE & PUT OUT MORE POLITICAL STUFF - THE BOOK STORE IS CALLED HOUSMANS & ITS STILL THERE IN KINGS CROSS - AK CONTINUED TO GROW & WHEN IT GOT TO A CERTAIN LEVEL - WHEN IT WAS TOO MUCH FOR ME TO HANDLE - IT BECAME A COLLECTIVE WITH ME & A FEW FRIENDS & THEN IT JUST GREW FROM THERE - WWW.AKPRESS.ORG

- EDINBURGH, OAKLAND & PURGITSVILLE WEST VIRGINIA

RAMSEY KANAAN - 03/23/2K7 - OAKLAND CA

I HAD SEEN MANY AMAZING BOOKS PUBLISHED BY AK PRESS LONG BEFORE I ACTUALLY MET RAMSEY WHO IS ONE OF THE HARDEST WORKING GUYS IN INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING - AT THIS POINT I ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH GOES INTO KEEPING SOMETHING LIKE AK ALIVE & I AM ALWAYS INSPIRED NOT ONLY BY THEIR PUBLICATIONS BUT BY THE COMMITMENT THAT EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THIS WORKER RUN COLLECTIVE MAKES! - PLEASE CHECK THEIR WEBSITE - WWW.AKPRESS.ORG - & IF AK IS NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP RAMSEY BUSY HE HAS LAUNCHED A NEW PUBLISHING PROJECT - IN HIS OWN WORDS "EVERYONE HAS TO HAVE A HOBBY. EVEN WORKAHOLIC OVERACHIEVERS." - PM IS A NEW PUBLISHING VENTURE FOR ALL THE PROJECTS THAT RAMSEY DOESN'T HAVE THE TIME OR ENERGY TO DO VIA AK - EARLY RELEASES INCLUDE CHUMBAWAMBA CDS, DERRICK JENSEN BOOKS, VEGAN COOKBOOKS, AND HACKER NOVELS & LOTS OF PUNK ROCK - YOU CAN CONTACT RAMSEY – RAMSEY@PMPRESS.ORG - & ANY MINUTE NOW THEIR WEBSITE WILL BE UP & RUNNING - WWW.PMPRESS.ORG

TO CONTACT FLY PLEASE EMAIL FLY@BWAY.NET (PUT MRR IN THE SUBJECT SO I KNOW IT S NOT SPAM!) - ZINES NOW AVAILABLE - DOG DAYZ #1 & #2 - PEOP (LE)S ZINES #2 & #3 (NEW PEOPS BOOK SOON TO COME!!) - OTHER COMIX & MINI COMIX ALSO AVAILABLE PLUS ZERO CONTENT CDS!! - EMAIL FLY FOR MORE INFO!!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# DOMI DELGADO DE FAMILIA REAL, QUE MUERA EL PUNK, NO LOS PUNKS

*By Yotti,* los80pasanfactura@hotmail.com

On July 18, 2007 Spanish punk Domi Delgado passed away in San Sebastián (Basque County, Spain).

A restless musician, the punk attitude of DIY deeply moved Domi, and in merely three years (from 1980 to 1983) he became the core of the punk movement in the Canary Islands (and more specifically in Santa Cruz, Tenerife).

And even now the news about his death and burial has swept through the press. He had planned to perform with Ataúd Vacante (together with Silver and Pistol of Familia Real) this summer after ten years without playing together. The tour of Ataúd Vacante will be dedicated to his memory and is opening every show with a brutal and impassioned performance of "Destruye" in his honor.

Simultaneous punk rock provoker and lover/critic of pop, it was that duality that came through in his music and aesthetic, he did numerous fanzines including *Caos e Idioteces*, *80 Miligramos*, *El Libro Negro de Petete* and he released tapes of the best bands of the time, the cream of the crop (which is to say everything that was coming out back then). Creative, multifaceted, and original he released his own music on vinyl and cassette.

He was a member of the following bands and projects: Familia Real, Taco & The Bunnytex, Esnifador, Fontanería Fernández, Dinámica Subalterna, Desastre Modelno, El Humano Marrano, Resplandor Aritmético and a bottomless source of Canary Island versions of all that happened on the peninsula. After leaving the islands to go to the peninsula for work motives he maintained contact with his friends and with the Canary Island scene and that's how people here got to know De Picnic, Florita Delgado, and his collaboration in other projects like La Traka, La Sonora Coñoterapia, or his work with Poch (Derribos Arias). From this final reunion in 1990 he recorded four exciting songs under the name D.D. Fan Club. But perhaps for all who are reading this he is better known for his work on the Familia Real single, released in 1982, with the songs "Destruye," and "Depresión."

The main tension that arose between mythical punk groups from La Laguna (Tenerife) Escorbuto Crónico and Familia Real, besides the distinctive political character of Escorbuto Crónico, were caused by Domi himself. Although the bands did eventually play together he never stopped criticizing Escorbuto Crónico in his fanzines. When Johnny Rotten transformed himself into John Lydon and created PIL Domi's world was blown wide open and he embraced many of the bands from the British new wave era that years before he had rejected as being trendy.

If there was something that he never forgave Silver (singer of

Domi Delgado in Esnifador

El pasado 18 de julio falleció en San Sebastián (Euskadi) Domi Delgado. Músico inquieto, el hazlo tu mismo del punk le caló muy hondo, y así fue como en apenas 3 años (1980-1983) era el núcleo centrífugo de la movida en Santa Cruz de Tenerife. En las islas ha sido constante en la prensa, aún hoy, su fallecimiento, y noticias sobre su entorno. Este verano iba a actuar junto a Ataúd Vacante (con Silver y Pistol de Familia Real), tras 10 años de la desaparición de este grupo. Motivo por el cual, la gira de Ataúd va dedicada a Domi, abriendo cada actuación con la mejor versión del Destruye que hemos escuchado nunca

Actitud punk provocadora, amante-crítico del pop, esa dualidad se hizo notar en lo musical y en lo estético, con multitud de fanzines (*Caos e Idioteces*, *80 Miligramos*, *El Libro Negro de Petete*,...) y cassettes editadas con la flor y nata (es decir, todo lo que había) de las bandas del momento. Creativo, polifacético y original editó sus trabajos en vinilo y cassettes. Miembro protagonista de bandas y proyectos como Familia Real, Taco & The Bunnytex, Esnifador (de donde hemos tomado este primer plano), Fontanería Fernández, Dinámica Subalterna, Desastre Modelno, El Humano Marrano, Resplandor Aritmético, y un sin fin de versiones canarias de lo que sucedía en la península. Tras su marcha por motivos laborales a la península, no perdería el contacto con sus amigos y con la escena canaria, y así fue como conocimos por aquí De Picnic, Florita Delgado, y su implicación en otros proyectos como La Traka, La Sonora Coñoterapia, o junto a Poch (Derribos Arias). De esa última unión en el '90 registró 4 emotivas canciones bajo el nombre D. D. Fan Club (Domi Delgado).

Quizás para todos los que lean esto, será más recordado por el single de Familia Real donde compuso las canciones Destruye y Depresión en 1982. Los principales problemas existentes entre Escorbuto Crónico (mítico grupo punk de la ciudad de La Laguna, Tenerife) y Familia Real, además del marcado carácter político de los Escorbuto, era el propio Domi, que aunque llegaron a tocar juntas las dos bandas, no dejaba de criticarlos en sus fanzines. Cuando Johnny Rotten se transforma en John Lydon, y crea PIL, la cabeza de Domi estalla y abraza a muchos grupos de la nueva ola británica, que años antes los había rechazado por "modenos".

Si hay algo que nunca perdonó a Silver (cantante de Familia Real) fue precisamente que rompiera la banda. Familia Real era el mayor

Familia Real) for, it was the break up of the band. It was a source of great happiness in Domi's life and he lived for the band.

Many of Domi's recordings still haven't seen the light of day, from a final demo with new and original songs to old recordings of Familia Real songs. There's plenty of interest in putting out all of his material, especially the unreleased Familia Real stuff. As soon as it happens *MRR* readers will be among the first to know.

Well aware of his talent, Domi was still a reserved person, but he had no problem with speaking his mind. He ran from interviews and favorable reviews of his work. He was versed in the strange art of choosing his friends and even more his enemies. His provocative character worked on punk purists and trendies including against those components in his own groups which is probably the reason why his presence never went unnoticed.

But no, it's for all of this here that Domi Domiciano Delgado will never leave us. This unique, unpredictable and unequaled individual will always be amongst us because although he tended to shy away from people he knew where and with whom he wanted to be.

For the rest of us we're left with this damned little single, part of our punk heritage and you can count on its place of privilege in the *Maximum Rocknroll* record library.

From Tenerife Silver, Pistol, and Edui send their greetings and thanks for the great reception Familia Real receives in the pages of *MRR*. Eternal thanks.

motivo de alegría en la vida de Domi, para el grupo vivía.

Multitud de grabaciones suyas no han visto la luz, como una última demo que trajo a Tenerife con temas propios y revisiones de Familia Real. Hay mucho interés en editar todo su material, especialmente el de Familia Real. En caso de hacerse serán los redactores (y por lo tanto los lectores) del *Maximum* los primeros en saberlo.

Conocedor de su talento, era de un carácter muy reservado, pero no por ello exento de espetarte impropios, huir de entrevistas y de comentarios favorables sobre su trabajo. Dominaba el extraño arte de elegir a sus amigos, y sobretodo a sus "enemigos". Su carácter provocador le llevaba a ensañarse con los punkies puristas y los modernos, incluso contra los componentes de sus grupos, motivo por el cual la presencia de Domi nunca pasaba desapercibida.

Pero no, no es por todo lo aquí expuesto por lo que Domi, Domiciano Delgado, nunca nos abandonará. Un individuo único, inigualable, imprevisible, nunca dejará de estar entre nosotros, porque aunque él huyera, sabía donde y entre quienes quería estar.

A todos nosotros nos queda este maldito single, parte del Patrimonio Punk de la Humanidad, que cuenta con su lugar de privilegio en la Discoteca del *Maximun Rock'n'Roll*.

Desde Tenerife, Silver ( voz), Pistol (batería) y Edui (bajo)envían un saludo en señal de agradecimiento por el buen recibimiento que tiene Familia Real en estas páginas. Eternamente agradecidos...

# FLY ME TO THE MOON: SPACE HOTEL SEES 2012 OPENING

*Reuters*

"Galactic Suite," the first hotel planned in space, expects to open for business in 2012 and would allow guests to travel around the world in 80 minutes. Its Barcelona-based architects say the space hotel will be the most expensive in the galaxy, costing $4 million for a three-day stay. During that time guests would see the sun rise 15 times a day and use Velcro suits to crawl around their pod rooms by sticking themselves to the walls like Spiderman.

Company director Xavier Claramunt says the three-bedroom boutique hotel's joined up pod structure, which makes it look like a model of molecules, was dictated by the fact that each pod room had to fit inside a rocket to be taken into space. "It's the bathrooms in zero gravity that are the biggest challenge," says Claramunt. "How to accommodate the more intimate activities of the guests is not easy." But they may have solved the issue of how to take a shower in weightlessness -- the guests will enter a spa room in which bubbles of water will float around. When guests are not admiring the view from their portholes they will take part in scientific experiments on space travel.

Galactic Suite began as a hobby for former aerospace engineer Claramunt, until a space enthusiast decided to make the science fiction fantasy a reality by fronting most of the $3 billion needed to build the hotel. An American company intent on colonizing Mars, which sees Galaxy Suite as a first step, has since come on board, and private investors from Japan, the United States and the United Arab Emirates are in talks.

Plenty rich enough

If Claramunt is secretive about the identity of his generous backer, he is more forthcoming about the customer he can expect. "We have calculated that there are 40,000 people in the world who could afford to stay at the hotel. Whether they will want to spend money on going into space, we just don't know."

Four million dollars might be a lot to spend on a holiday, but those in the nascent space tourism industry say hoteliers have been slow on the uptake because no one thought the cost of space travel would come down as quickly as it has. Galactic Suite said the price included not only three nights in space. Guests also get eight weeks of intensive training at a James Bond-style space camp on a tropical island. "There is fear associated with going into space," said Claramunt. "That's why the shuttle rocket will remain fixed to the space hotel for the duration of the guests' stay, so they know they can get home again."

In an era of concern over climate change, Galaxy Suite have no plans so far to offset the pollution implications of sending a rocket to carry just six guests at a time into space. "But," says Claramunt, "I'm hopeful that the impact of seeing the earth from a distance will stimulate the guests' urge to value and protect our planet."

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# ARE YOUR JEANS SAGGING? GO DIRECTLY TO JAIL

*From an article by Niko Koppel in* The New York Times

JAMARCUS MARSHALL, a 17-year-old high school sophomore in Mansfield, La., believes that no one should be able to tell him how low to wear his jeans. "It's up to the person who's wearing the pants," he said.

Some communities have outlawed this style of dress. The reaction reminds some of the outrage engendered by zoot suit styles during the 1940s. Mr. Marshall's sagging pants, a style popularized in the early 1990s by hip-hop artists, are becoming a criminal offense in a growing number of communities, including his own.

Starting in Louisiana, an intensifying push by lawmakers has determined pants worn low enough to expose underwear poses a threat to the public, and they have enacted indecency ordinances to stop it. Since June 11, sagging pants have been against the law in Delcambre, La., a town of 2,231 that is 80 miles southwest of Baton Rouge. The style carries a fine of as much as $500 or up to a six-month sentence. "We used to wear long hair, but I don't think our trends were ever as bad as sagging," said Mayor Carol Broussard.

An ordinance in Mansfield, a town of 5,496 near Shreveport, subjects offenders to a fine (as much as $150 plus court costs) or jail time (up to 15 days). Police Chief Don English said the law, which takes effect Sept. 15, will set a good civic image.

Behind the indecency laws may be the real issue—the hip-hop style itself, which critics say is worn as a badge of delinquency, with its distinctive walk conveying thuggish swagger and a disrespect for authority. Also at work is the larger issue of freedom of expression and the questions raised when fashion moves from being merely objectionable to illegal. Sagging began in prison, where oversized uniforms were issued without belts to prevent suicide and their use as weapons. The style spread through rappers and music videos, from the ghetto to the suburbs and around the world.

Efforts to outlaw sagging in Virginia and statewide in Louisiana in 2004, failed, usually when opponents invoked a right to self-expression. But the latest legislative efforts have taken a different tack, drawing on indecency laws, and their success is inspiring lawmakers in other states. In the West Ward of Trenton, Councilwoman Annette Lartigue is drafting an ordinance to fine or enforce community service in response to what she sees as the problem of exposing private parts in public."It's a fad like hot pants; however, I think it crosses the line when a person shows their backside," Ms. Lartigue said. "You can't legislate how people dress, but you can legislate when people begin to become indecent by exposing their body parts."

The American Civil Liberties Union has been steadfast in its opposition to dress restrictions. Debbie Seagraves, the executive director of the ACLU of Georgia said, "I don't see any way that something constitutional could be crafted when the intention is to single out and label one style of dress that originated with the black youth culture, as an unacceptable form of expression."

School districts have become more aggressive in enforcing dress bans, as the courts have given them greater latitude. Restrictions have been devised for jeans, miniskirts, long hair, piercing, logos with drug references and gang-affiliated clothing including colors, hats and jewelry. Dress codes are showing up in unexpected places. The National Basketball Association now stipulates that no sports apparel, sunglasses, headgear, exposed chains or medallions may be worn at league-sponsored events. After experiencing a brawl that spilled into the stands and generated publicity headaches, the league sought to enforce a business-casual dress code, saying that hip-hop clothing projected an image that alienated middle-class audiences.

According to Andrew Bolton, the curator at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, fashions tend to be decried when they "challenge the conservative morality of a society." Not since the zoot suit has a style been greeted with such strong disapproval. The exaggerated boxy long coat and tight-cuffed pants, started in the 1930s, was the emblematic style of a subculture of young urban minorities. It was viewed as unpatriotic and flouted a fabric conservation order during World War II. The clothing was at the center of what were called Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles, racially motivated beatings of Hispanic youths by sailors. The youths were stripped of their garments, which were burned in the street.

Following a pattern of past fashion bans, the sagging prohibitions are seen by some as racially motivated because the wearers are young, predominantly African-American men. Yet, this legislation has been proposed largely by African-American officials. It may speak to a generation gap. Michael Eric Dyson, a professor of sociology at Georgetown University and the author of Know What I Mean?: Reflections on Hip Hop, said, "They've bought the myth that sagging pants represents an offensive lifestyle which leads to destructive behavior."

Last week, Atlanta Councilman C. T. Martin sponsored an amendment to the city's indecency laws to ban sagging, which he called an epidemic. "We are trying to craft a remedy," said Mr. Martin, who sees the problem as "a prison mentality." But Larry Harris, Jr., 28, a musician from Miami, who stood in oversize gear outside a hip-hop show in Times Square, denied that prison style was his inspiration. "I think what you have here is people who don't understand the language of hip-hop," he said.

A dress code ordinance proposed in Stratford, Conn., by Councilman Alvin O'Neal was rejected at a Town Council meeting last Monday, drawing criticism that the law was unconstitutional and unjustly encouraged racial profiling. Many residents agreed that the town had more pressing issues.

Benjamin Chavis, the former executive director of the NAACP, said, "I think to criminalize how a person wears their clothing is more offensive than what the remedy is trying to do." Dr. Chavis, who is often pictured in an impeccable suit and tie among the baggy outfits of the hip-hop elite, is a chairman of the Hip Hop Summit Action Network, a coalition he founded with the music mogul Russell Simmons. He said that the coalition will challenge the ordinances in court. "The focus should be on cleaning up the social conditions that the sagging pants comes out of," he said. "That they wear their pants the way they do is a statement of the reality that they're struggling with on a day-to-day basis."

# STUDENT'S PATH TO FBI INFORMANT IN GREEN SCARE TRIAL

*From an article by Denny Walsh in* The Sacramento Bee

An FBI undercover informant spun a compelling account Tuesday for a Sacramento federal court jury of how she went from being a 17-year-old Florida college student four years ago to the government's key witness in the trial of a man accused of plotting domestic terrorism.

To shield her true identity and protect her from retribution, the woman testified only as "Anna," the alias she used in her undercover work. The judge knows her real name, as does the defense attorney, who agreed to the unusual procedure. Dressed in a white suit and pale blue blouse, the dark-haired 21-year-old told her story in a cool, matter-of-fact manner. She said that in the fall of 2003, as research for a class project, she dressed in "grunge" clothes and mingled with protesters at an international free trade conference.

After she presented a report to the class, the witness recalled, a fellow student who was a state law enforcement officer asked for a copy of the paper she had written about her experiences. The paper found its way to the FBI in Miami, and she was recruited to infiltrate the "anarchist movement" that consistently has a presence at anti-establishment demonstrations, she said. The bureau's proposition that she report all violent and criminal activity she witnessed at these events "intrigued" her, she said.

"Anna" was instructed "never to assume a leadership role, never suggest anything, and give information only when asked," she testified. She kept in touch with FBI agents primarily by cellular telephone. Between January 2004 and January 2006, the FBI paid her $31,000 in compensation and $35,000 to cover her expenses traveling the country from protest to protest and from one "anarchist" meeting to another. She said she wore the "dirtiest, smelliest" clothes she could find, dyed her hair every color of the rainbow, and never wore makeup or jewelry. Her first assignment was the 2004 Group of Eight, or G8, summit in Georgia. The organization is a forum for the governments of eight major countries, including the United States. Its annual summit is attended by the heads of government of the member countries.

"Anna" next was a demonstrator at the Democratic National Convention in Boston and later the Republican National Convention in New York City. She met the defendant in the Sacramento trial, Eric McDavid, at an "anarchist" conference in summer 2004 in Des Moines, Iowa. The main item on the conference's agenda was "sharing skills on how to spot undercover law enforcement people."

"At that time, I thought he was inconsequential," the witness said of McDavid.

The 29-year-old McDavid, of Foresthill, is charged with conspiring to damage and destroy property, including government facilities, by means of fire and explosives. His alleged targets included a U.S. Forest Service genetics tree lab in Placerville and the Nimbus Dam and nearby fish hatchery in Rancho Cordova. "Anna" testified that McDavid envisioned a nationwide bombing campaign against perceived enemies of the environment for which he would credit the Earth Liberation Front. The FBI has identified ELF as a terrorist movement dedicated to violent attacks on what its followers believe are symbols of society's destruction and exploitation of the environment.

"Anna" testified that McDavid invited her into his conspiracy, along with Zachary Jenson, a transient and regular on the demonstration circuit who was then 19, and Lauren Weiner, a student at the Philadelphia College of Arts who was then 18. Wearing a body recorder, driving a car rigged with video and audio recording equipment, and living with the trio in an isolated cabin in Dutch Flat that the FBI wired for video and audio recording before they moved in, "Anna" recorded hours of conversations about possible bombing targets, recipes for homemade explosive devices and the purchase of material needed to make the bombs. Jenson and Weiner have pleaded guilty for their roles in the conspiracy and are expected to testify against McDavid in return for leniency when they are sentenced.

On Jan. 12, 2006, "Anna" had a bad day. On a trip in her car from Dutch Flat to Auburn a recording device popped out of the dashboard. McDavid cradled it in his hand and looked at it with some curiosity. She grabbed the device from him and shoved it back in the dashboard and used a profanity to describe her vehicle's mechanical state.

It was especially unnerving because McDavid had once told her he would kill her with the hunting knife he always carried if she turned out to be an undercover law enforcement operative, she testified. On the return trip, "Anna" ran a stop sign on the Interstate 80 off ramp at Dutch Flat and was pulled over by a California Highway Patrol officer, who let her go with a warning. The others were apoplectic at having been stopped by a law enforcement officer so close to where they were living.

Back at the cabin, "Anna" and Weiner quarreled, and the witness testified she felt like she was being treated as an outsider. "My stress level was such that I didn't feel like I could continue in my role," she recalled. That evening she walked to where FBI agents were watching the cabin and told them she didn't believe she could go on. They assured her they would arrest her three companions the next day, and they did.

# CHILEAN ANARCHISTS CLAIM BOMBING OUTSIDE BRITISH EMBASSY

*From an article on anarchistnews.org*

A little known anarchist group in Chile recently took responsibility for a bomb that exploded outside the British embassy in Santiago causing minor damage and no casualties. In an email to Santiago's Bio-Bio Radio station, the Autonomous and Destructive Forces Leon Czolgosz said the bombing "represents our armed solidarity with anti-imperialist forces fighting cowardly occupation armies in places where capital is sinking its teeth." "We're talking about Iraq, Afghanistan and other similar territories," the group added in its email.

The explosive device blew up a few meters (yards) from the British embassy building at 10:15 pm Sunday (0215 GMT Monday). It caused only slight damage and no injuries to passersby. Despite its proximity to the diplomatic mission, a Foreign Office spokesman in London said it was "not clear what the target was." The blast also caused minor damage to a Chiletabacos company building nearby.

The Czolgosz group had previously made an appearance in January 2006 when it claimed responsibility for another blast in Santiago outside the National Intelligence Agency that injured one person and slightly damaged the building. The group is named after a US anarchist of Polish origin who in 1901 shot to death then US president William McKinley.

Police colonel Jorge Rojas said the blast outside the British embassy was under investigation. The embassy's press attache Marianne Becker on Monday said the delegation had not come under threat before the bombing. "Not as far as I know," she told reporters, adding that any threat would have immediately set off tighter security measures around the embassy.

# MIKEY OFFENDER DEAD AT 46

*by Pat Doyle (Offender's Drummer)*

Mikey "Offender" Donaldson passed away in his sleep on September 22nd in Barcelona Spain where he had recently relocated from Amsterdam. The cause is unknown at the moment. He was 46. He is survived by his brother Joe Donaldson, sister Marie Donaldson Ward, and sister Sumiko Hakari, all of Killeen, Texas.

Mikey was the bass player for Austin punk band the Offenders from 1978-86. He also recorded bass tracks on MDC's groundbreaker *Millions of Dead Cops* and DRI's *Dealing With It*. Mikey also performed regularly with MDC in the early 1980s. He moved to San Francisco in 1986 and went on to play and record with Gary Floyd (Dicks) and Lynn Perko (Imperial Teen) in Sister Double Happiness. After leaving the music scene for ten years or so, Mikey returned to Austin and reunited with the original Offenders line-up for a gig at Emos in March 2002. In 2003 MDC recruited Mikey and the original line-up, recorded a new album, and have been touring all over the world ever since.

Mikey is universally regarded as one of the most innovative and inimitable masters of the bass guitar. He played his Rickenbacker like it was an out-sized rhythm guitar. Taking cues from Jack Bruce and Lemmy, Mikey pioneered an agressive speed-picking style and liberal employment of bass chords that few have been able to emulate in the past 20 years. He will be sorely missed, certainly in Austin and his hometown of Killeen, but also across the globe. A memorial celebration in Austin is pending and the date will be announced soon.

*by David Dictor*

Mikey had rediscovered life in Holland in the last four years. His funny easy-going nature was known throughout Europe. He fell in love with and lived with beautiful run away teen model and merch goddess, Selina Hakkensen. He relished playing with Tony Slug from BGK's band The Nitwitz and his own squat band Brutalized SS.

Mikey was planning a tour with MDC for Austailia and New Zealand for February 2008 and with the Nitwitz to Turkey in April 2008. He loved touring and loved music. He went everywhere with his music CD binder. He loved Swedish Hardcore and was up on the most obscure of bands everywhere. Mikey was a young hearted person from the old school of hardcore. He was speed metal before the term was coined. They don't make many like this and when he is gone...well he is fucking gone. It is a sad fucking day but know Mikey would want you to love life, belly up to the bar and yes, practice your instrument like it was the most important thing in life.

## HILLY KRYSTAL DEAD AT 75

*From an article by Ben Sisario in* The New York Times

Hilly Kristal, who founded CBGB, the Bowery bar that became the cradle of punk and art-rock in New York in the 1970s and served as the inspiration for musician-friendly rock dives throughout the world, died in Manhattan on August 28th. He was 75. His son, Mark Dana Kristal, told The Associated Press that the cause was complications from lung cancer.

From its opening in late 1973, when Mr. Kristal, a lover of acoustic music, gave the club its name, an abbreviation of the kinds of music he originally intended to feature there—country, bluegrass and blues—until a dispute with its landlord forced the club to close last October, CBGB presented thousands of bands within its eternally crumbling, flyer-encrusted walls. Most famously, it served as the incubator for the diverse underground scene of New York in the 1970s and early '80s, with acts like the Ramones, Patti Smith, Blondie, Television, Talking Heads and Sonic Youth playing some of their earliest and most important concerts there, at a time when there were few outlets in the city for innovative rock music. "There was no real venue in 1973 for people like us," Ms. Smith said today. "We didn't fit into the cabarets or the folk clubs. Hilly wanted the people that nobody else wanted. He wanted us."

Besides his son, Mr. Kristal is survived by a daughter, Lisa Kristal Burgman, and two grandchildren.

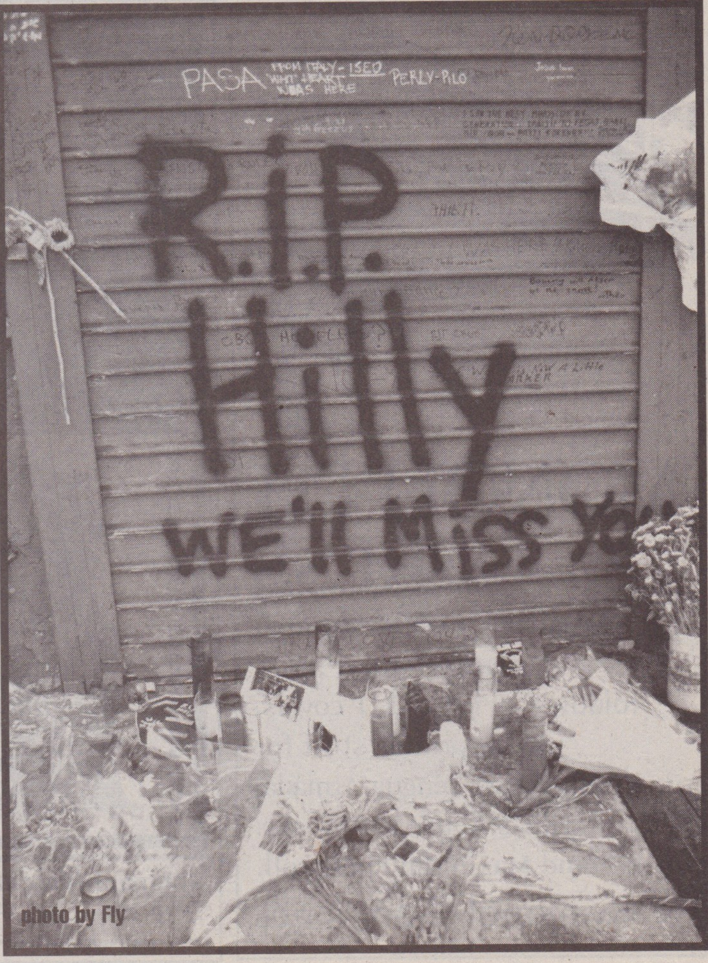

photo by Fly

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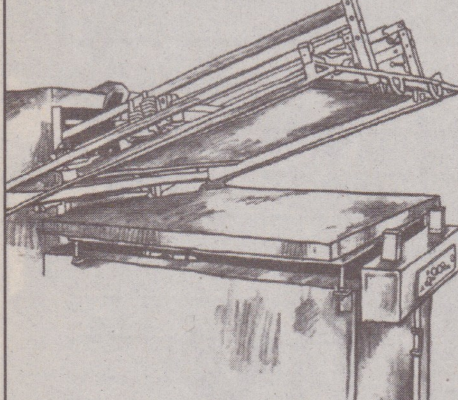

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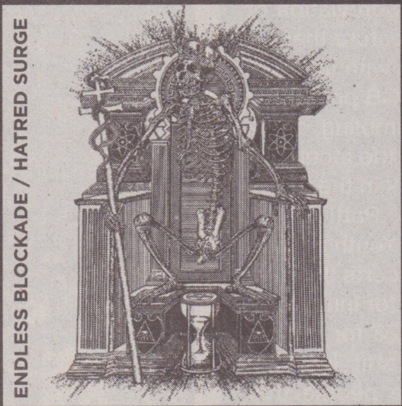

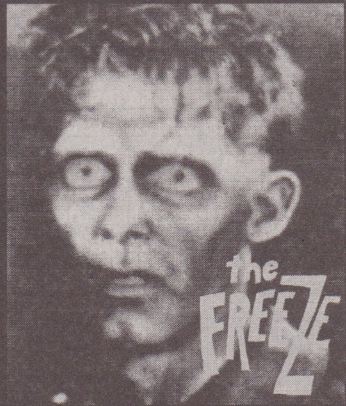


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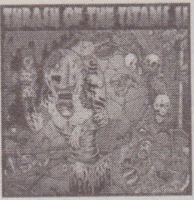

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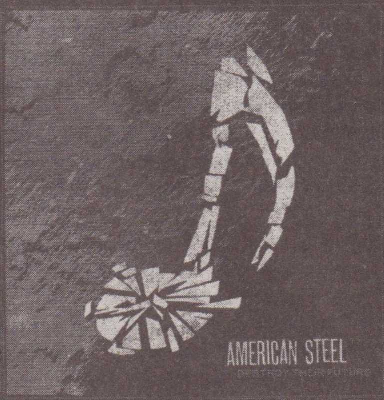


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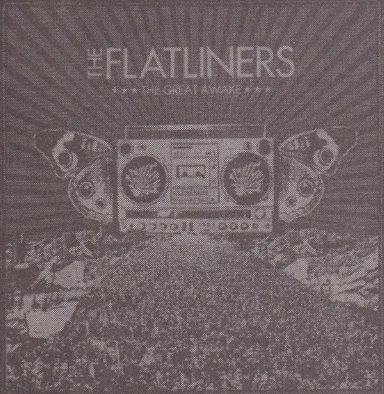


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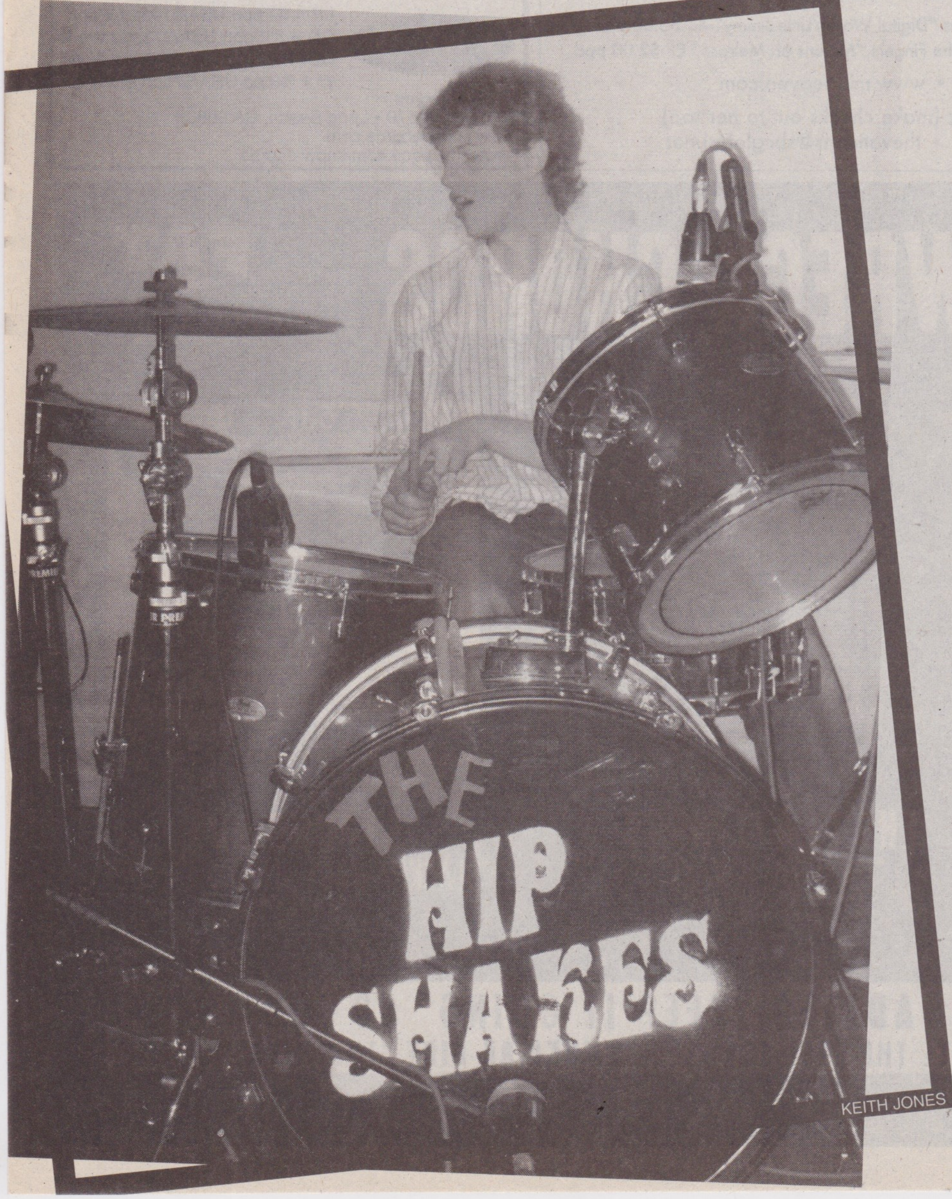
# THE HIP SHAKES

Last year, Slovenly Recordings put out a bunch of singles all at once, most of them household names that resonate around the family home with such familiarity—Reigning Sound, Black Lips—and you got 'em cheaper if you bought the whole batch. But wait! What's this other record? The Hipshakes? Who? And they're English? OK, I'll play that one later. And it's filed away in the hope that it can be traded for food in some kind of Mad Max style future where records, rather than gasoline, are fought over by marauding tribesmen on shitty looking motorbikes—a kind of Mad Kugelberg, as it were. But what happens if I play it? The needle rumbles into place. What sounds like a bunch of retarded kids freaking out start chanting, "OK, Alright! OK, Alright!" over and over again—it's disorientating—and then the guitar comes in. My god, that's the dumbest riff I've ever heard! No! No! Then stabs of horrible sounding bass and then...the singer fluffs his cue! What comes next feels like every drunken Saturday night came flashing back at 200 miles per hour. Like everything's gone insane! It's like being in the presence of an entire universe filled with morons! One minute and eleven seconds later it's over. Soon everyone knows about this insane fucking record—a record made by garage-obsessed kids who somehow manage to out-Germ The Germs! The Hipshakes' rise to stardom was assured. I went to talk to these idiots myself and find out where they came from, how they got that sound, and to talk about their LP, The Hipshakes Shake Their Hips, which has delighted, shocked, and pissed people off in pretty much equal measure.

Interview done by Shaun A. in the backyard of The Washington in Sheffield until we were too wasted to speak.



KEITH JONES

**MRR: Who are the Hipshakes?**
Bruce: *(laughs)*
Andrew: We're...uh, three people. Who like playing garage rock in the pursuit of shittiness. Which we achieve on a regular basis.
**MRR: I've read some reviews of your album—funny reviews. What's been the most extreme reaction that you've seen?**
Dan: There's this supposedly punk thing in the Netherlands where they class current emo bands like My Chemical Romance—which was their number one album—and they got our CD and gave it 1 out 100, which is quite a high scale, and then smashed the CD to pieces.
Andrew and Bruce: *(laughter)*
Dan: At least it got 1 out of 100.
**MRR: Better luck next time, guys! The singles have a real thick sound—did you want a change on the album or was it just because a) you didn't have any money, or b) you couldn't be bothered?**
Andrew: Well, we got this guy to produce it, and he didn't know what he was doing, and he managed to come up with exactly the sound we wanted—the sound of awful, being played by idiots.
Dan: It's nice to have a full stop after the run of singles, especially as there's at least one song off each single on the album. So it's good to have a change.
Andrew: There'll probably be a different sound again for our new ones, more like a combination of original sounds. Like, now we can play a little bit better.
Dan: Yeah, it's quite good to alienate a few people who really liked the singles and annoy people who are like, "hey wait a minute, this doesn't sound exactly like the other stuff! Oh my god!"
Andrew: People couldn't deal with that.
Dan: Either buy it or don't buy it, it doesn't really matter, does it? You can have the singles and you've almost got an album there.
Andrew: People who like the first singles probably like the new songs we've done, I would guess. Then the people who don't like the album don't like the album. Then we'll be stuck in an infinite loop of hatred.

# WE INVENTED ZERO-FI

Dan: Quite a lot of people hyped up our single, so it's pretty funny to turn around and give them an album of...*(laughs)*...of shit.

Andrew: Especially after Slovenly thought it was gonna be the greatest album of all time.

All: *(laughter)*

Dan: At first he did try to make us record half of it again in a cleaner style so it would be half-dirty and half-clean, but we forced him into the whole dirty.

Andrew: We invented Zero-Fi.

**MRR: Minus-Fi!**

Bruce: It's definitely a unique album.

**MRR: It's pretty good that you did it, and your albums were quite distorted as well, it's kind of following a tradition, I suppose.**

Andrew: I like it a lot.

**MRR: Does it sound like you do live? More than the singles do?**

Andrew: Yeah.

Dan: More than the singles especially as I don't play multiple guitar parts live.

Andrew: The thing is, we're never gonna make a record worse than that, are we? Like, sound-wise, no matter what we do. So I think it's a good starting point anyway. It's really good to do your first record as obnoxiously as possible cause you've got all the rest of your time as a band to do something—if you ever wanted to do something.

**MRR: Get the acoustic guitars out.**

Andrew: Our "unplugged" session is what you've really got to look forward to. Kurt Cobain style.

Dan: I like the fidelity of stuff like *Let It Bloom* and the King Khan and BBQ stuff.

**MRR: You should go over and record with King Khan.**

Dan: We want to.

Andrew: We need to get in touch with him and find people who know him.

**MRR: And you can get to go to Berlin.**

Dan: The three of us can dress as a part of the Berlin Wall. With paper maché suits with our heads sticking out.

Andrew: Using this graffiti. *(pointing out the shit graffiti we're surrounded by)*

**MRR: When you were at school did you think about being in a band?**

Bruce: We were in a band when we were at school.

Andrew: Since we were about fifteen, was it?

Bruce: Yeah.

Dan: Five, six years of being in a band now.

**MRR: This was the Hipshakes?**

Andew: Yeah, we were the Hipshakes at school, and everyone hated us. There were two or three bands in the year and they kind of did Red Hot Chili Peppers style stuff.

Dan: One was pop punk.

Andrew: And everyone had a go at us.

Dan: They said we took it too seriously, whereas really we were just having a good time.

Andrew: And we're still in this band and we've done—I mean, we're never gonna be the world's most successful band, but those people were tossers 'cause at the end of the day, they were playing the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

**MRR: What did you listen to back then?**

Andrew: Strokes...stuff.

Dan: The Hives.

Bruce: The Hives were a big influence.

Andrew: Actually, the Oblivians were one of the first bands we liked cause we heard them on a compilation. You know, like when garage rock was popular? *Kerrang!* magazine had this compilation made by the Hives.

Dan: I'm not ashamed to say they were our "gateway" band. Cause on that Hives compilation was the Compulsive Gamblers, the Oblivians, Radio Birdman, a band from Sweden called Randy who are really, really good and still going now.

Andrew: Basically, we just bought their record collections, the people from the Hives.

Dan: Flamin' Groovies was on it as well, stuff like that. And then, when we recorded our first demos, everyone in Bakewell [the Hipshakes' Northern England hometown] told us we sounded like *Pebbles*, *Nuggets*, and things like that. So we went out and bought them and we were like "Yeah, this is pretty good as well."

Andrew: It tends to be that we buy the stuff after we've accidentally sounded like it.

**MRR: So you got the sound first?**

Dan: I suppose, if you're a bunch of kids in the middle of nowhere in a garage, there's a certain sound that you're likely to make.

Andrew: Being at school and not being popular, you're going to end up playing music that's not popular.

Dan: As soon as we went popular, there was a massive group of us in the unpopular class. So we had quite a big counter weight.

Andrew: A lot of losers.

**MRR: Imagine that, like 90% of people you know are in the unpopular crowd. You think, 'hang on a second, we actually are popular!'**

Andrew: We still didn't get to have sex with any hot girls though. You're not popular 'til you get to have sex with hot girls.

**MRR: How long did it take you to start sounding good? To your ears anyway.**

Dan: To our ears? Uhhh…

Andrew: We'll tell you when it happens.

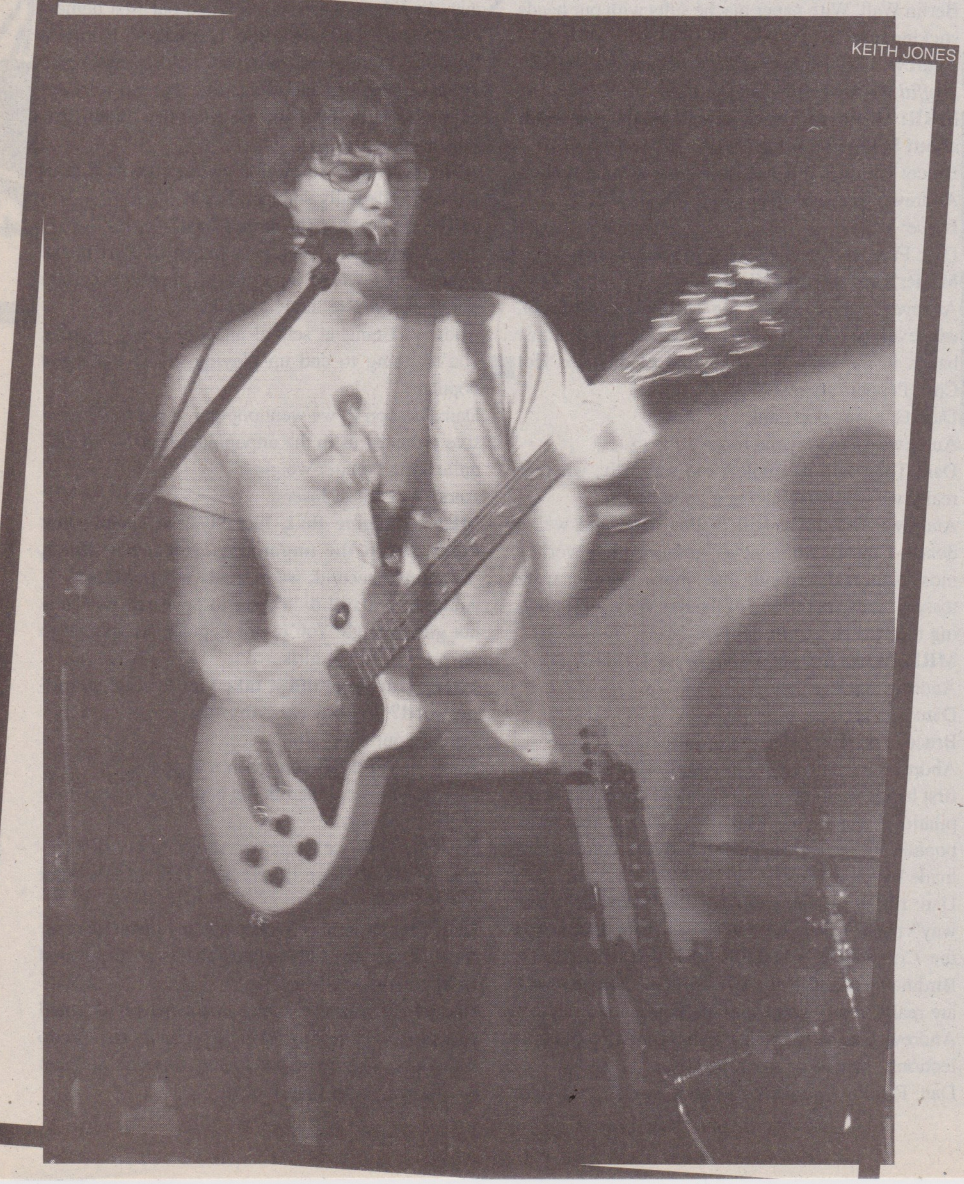
Dan: It was pretty bad in the beginning cause none of us could play.

Andrew: Then we wrote two songs on our first single. We wrote those in one day. That was the start of it.

Dan: That's when we kicked out any ideas for other sorts of sounds and decided that was the sound we'd pursue.

Andrew: It was a blessing that none of us could sing properly cause we'd have probably tried to do something where you had to sing properly and that would have been very foolish.

Dan: We were absolutely wild at early band practices cause we didn't play a gig for ages, and so now it's quite intense when we play. But it's not as wild as early band practices where we'd just, like, throw things around and writhe on the floor and stuff—and there'd be no audience, obviously.
Andrew: This was all linked to not having sex with any girls.
Dan and Bruce: *(laughter)*
Andrew: And the energy needed to come out somewhere.
Dan: Though once Andrew did get a girlfriend, for quite a while, we would go to band practices and he'd just go upstairs to get blow jobs and stuff. And now she's on TV! She's got a Sky channel and she interviews bands!
**MRR: No shit.**
Dan: She interviewed the Long Blondes the other day.
**MRR: Who writes, anyway?**
Dan: Who writes the songs?
**MRR: That make the whole world sing.**
Dan: Me and Andrew write the words and all three of us write all the riffs and stuff. Bruce has written guitar parts, everyone writes their bits and it all sounds right together.
Andrew: Just whoever's got an idea or something.
Dan: Some of our good songs have come from Bruce picking up a guitar before he could play it. We're listening to the Count Five or something, and he'll say 'hang on, I can play this' and he can't play it at all, but what he plays is actually pretty good so we make it into a song.
Bruce: I was trying to play "Action Woman" that time.
Andrew: "Action Woman" that sounds nothing like it. Did we record that?
**MRR: Did you play in Bakewell first off?**
Andrew: Our first gig was *(in dramatic voice)* Rowsley. An even smaller town.
Bruce: It's like a village, isn't it?
Dan: It's two or three miles away from Bakewell.
**MRR: How did they like it?**
Andrew: The police turned up.
Dan: Oh, yeah, it was sort of illegally run with selling beer and stuff by...
Andrew: Underage.
Dan: Some guys who were a bit like wide boys at school. One of them was a member of our band for a while. And yeah, I think some crappy bands came down from Sheffield and played and one of them borrowed my amp and it was horrible. But we played really funny and we got this guy on stage with us and he elbowed me in the face and I bled all over the guitar.
Andrew: *(dramatically)* And I put my face through the bass drum cause I'm so rock 'n' roll.
Dan: But it's mainly just that I didn't like to be nervous, rather than thinking, "Yeah! I'm the legend! Smashing my guitar."
Andrew: I thought I was going to vomit before our first gig.
Dan: They never really liked us.
Bruce: I thought it was all right.
Dan: Maybe. We still go and play in Bakewell occasionally cause people think we're signed.
Andrew: People liked us at our first gig cause it was all our friends who were there. Maybe at other gigs after that…this guy at school, who was quite popular and used to organize events, had this thing called Brainwash. He'd organized that and he'd be like, "Yeah, you boys can play," and then we'd play at like 5:00 before the doors had even opened. It was just to try to humiliate us, I think. But we were beyond humiliation at that point, so that's fine.
Dan: But we've played in Bakewell town hall since getting singles out and stuff and everyone just leaves before we play. We play to about three people. But they put us on as headliners because obviously they think we're—
Andrew: Signed.
Dan: Yeah, we tell 'em, "We're not signed!" Just cause we've had a few singles out, that doesn't mean we're, like, rolling in money or anything.
Andrew: It's really hard to explain to people the difference between having records out on small record labels, cause people don't know anything about that. People don't know that you can have a single out on Goner records or Slovenly and it doesn't really mean anything, other than that someone wants to hear your music, just dedicated people who do. They automatically think that you're signed.
**MRR: Was there much else to do in Bakewell?**
Dan: You could either be heavily into rugby, which Bruce was for a while until he got detached retinas—then he took up drumming to take out his frustration. Or you could be a farmer, or you could enjoy fighting.
Andrew: Being in Bakewell now is really good.
Dan: Yeah, going back is pretty good, going back on holidays and stuff. We play football a lot.
**MRR: It's kind of touristy, isn't it? There're a lot of people around.**
Andrew: You can get summer jobs as well because of that.
Bruce: You learn to avoid the areas where tourists go.
Dan: It's nice walking over the hills to Chatsworth with a beer.
Andrew: And you can go sit on the golf course late at night with a beer looking over the town, and cry onto each other's shoulders.
Bruce: We can have band practices sometimes.
Dan: Yeah, where Andrew lives there isn't any railway anymore, but he lives in what would have been the stationmaster's house. And it's in the middle of nowhere.
Andrew: Maybe that's why we weren't good—'cause nobody was around to tell us we weren't good, 'cause it was happening in the middle of nowhere.
**MRR: What kind of fun can you have in the evenings?**
Dan: Well, on a Friday, everyone from like 15-years-old and onwards would just go and drink themselves until they were sick. Bruce included. And they'd just


KEITH JONES

drink pint after pint of turbo shandy—half vodka, half beer—and just go and be sick in the river.
Bruce: It's good fun, Dan!
Dan: And we thought, we can buy our own beer, go to Andrew's garage, and play music and drink beer rather than just...
Andrew: Then we'd go down to Bakewell.
Dan: At band practices we used to put Bruce in the bass drum bag every week. And we used to run up and down the fields.
Andrew: And pretend to be horses.
Dan: We used to have camp-overs in a field that a farmer owned right next to Andrew's house and we'd invite the girls we liked over.
Andrew: And then we wouldn't score with them.
Dan: I went to sleep in a tent, and a girl got in the tent with me and was sort of being a bit pushy, but I didn't really like her at the time. But she's since blossomed and Andrew quite fancied her a few years ago.
Bruce: Which girl's this?
Andrew: Who's that?
Dan: Emma Mason. We didn't know she was going to become beautiful.
Andrew: She had a big nose.
Bruce: *(laughs)* She's alright.
Dan: Yes, she blossomed. 10 out of 10 to her.
**MRR: Ah, she missed out big time with the pop stars.**
Andrew: That's what we tell her.
Dan: If only I'd known. I could have snagged her young.
**MRR: When did you first play out of town then?**
Andew: I think we played in Sheffield with that Karen woman.
Dan: One of those 'Pay to Play' things at the Casbah.
Andrew: We had to sell so many tickets.
Dan: But that was a gateway to success because we were supporting a band called the Volts who were John Peel's then favorite band, so we sent John Peel a demo and he played it cause we'd mentioned the Volts. And from that we got to play in London.
Andrew: And then, when we were in London, someone heard us and sent our recording to Slovenly Pete who then put out our record. So it's like a long chain of one-offs.
Dan: On the front of the Slovenly single, the little face—he's called Senafonte—he's the guy who discovered us in London.
Andrew: It's the only time we'd ever played in London. It's weird, really, how we could be doing fuck-all right now if it weren't for that chain of events.
Dan: So maybe 'Pay to Play's not so bad.
Andrew: That's what we're saying, kids! Promoters want money from you!
**MRR: Have you played in London since?**
Dan: We played the Dirty Water Club and we played at a thing called "Architecture Rocks" *(laughs)*, which is run by this very…
Andrew: Fashion guy.
Dan: Effeminate man.
Andrew: He wanted to do our clothes for us but we refused.
Dan: This band, the Paddingtons, their stylist was there for us. We turned him down. We played for 15 minutes and we drank all their beer.
**MRR: I can't believe they have a stylist. They just look like anybody else.**
Dan: Every band has a stylist.
Andrew: We had a guy to look after us and he was like, "I'm so proud of you boys" afterwards, he was so camp. "Come on boys, come up on stage. Let's go now." It was amazing.
Dan: And there were loads of...just poseurs, it was really weird. We got a mini-bus and all our families came down with us and we had a good day out in London.
Andrew: We had a really bad review after that gig as well.
Bruce: Yeah, they said that we were awful.
Dan: It said, like, "They boast of playing really fast." I was like, it's not boast, it's fact. We do play really fast.
Bruce: It said we were like the Arctic Monkeys as well.
Dan: Yeah, it said, "They looked 13 but had an average age more like 21." Why would you put that in a review?
**MRR: How did the recording at Red Tape [Sheffield City Council-run recording studio responsible for the first three singles] come about?**
Dan: That was sort of tied in with this Battle of the Bands thing that we did in Chesterfield. We get a local paper called the *Derbyshire Times* and it was asking for bands to be in this Battle of the Bands, so we did that. Then, in the same thing, there was a review of us 'cause we were one of the only slightly different bands that played. We didn't win it; we got knocked out straight away. We were looking to see if we were in the paper and there was this advert for the Red Tape thing so we went for that as well. That cost 15 quid for four hours a week of recording and seminars and lessons on the music industry.
Andrew: So we now have a degree in the music industry.
Dan: Yeah, we have some sort of qualification.
**MRR: You had to do the whole course just to get recorded?**
Andrew: We only paid 15 quid each. And we got these ten songs out of it. We got so many hours of recording for 15 quid.
Dan: I remember them giving us a talk very early on about what would happen if we ever released any of them and we didn't really listen. But then we've since released eight of them. So I don't know if we owe them money or what.
Bruce: *(laughs)*
Dan: As well as helping us, and giving us an insight into the music industry, one guy who used to manage Killing Joke wanted to manage us. He was actually like, "Oh, you could go places and stuff," but we ended up turning him down. 'Cause we felt like doing stuff our own way.

KEITH JONES

Andrew: I forgot about that. Killing Joke, ha ha ha. He managed The Orb as well. He was like, "I've had number one records with the Orb. Number one in the charts."
Dan: All the stuff he taught us, basically, made us not want to sign with him because we were no longer so naïve about the music industry. But back in those days, we had to do this showcase where you'd play one song every once in a while in front of all the other bands and people would go wild for us and we'd hate everyone else. We'd just look like little scared kids and we'd thrash our instruments for a minute and then disappear.
Andrew: I think the thing to learn from all of this is never win a Battle of the Bands contest, cause that means you're...wrong.
**MRR: Win one hour in a professional recording studio!**
Andrew: One hour at Oh No! Studio. "What we've done here, see, is made everything fuzzy." The best thing about recording in that room is that every time I played the bass everything would shake so much.
**MRR: Were you surprised when people went nuts for "OK, Alright?"**
Dan: Oh, yeah! Lots. Very surprised.
Bruce: Definitely.
Dan: It gave us more confidence to be a bit cheeky and send out demos to more people.
Andrew: Yeah, we probably wouldn't have done that Goner thing if people hadn't liked us. I don't really worry about it too much. I like our songs that we do now, our new ones.
**MRR: Are you anywhere near getting a new album?**
Andrew: We're gonna do a lot of singles first.
Dan: We've got, I think, five or six new releases coming up. Singles. We just got booted off one of them, actually. This guy in America wanted to put Home Blitz and some other bands on a split single and we sent him a demo. We were the first band to get a song in—he'd asked us, we didn't just send it willy-nilly—and he was like, "Your place is guaranteed, I just have to sort out the other bands." Then he emailed me the other day and was like, "Home Blitz want to share a side with such-and-such and there's no room for you anymore. Sorry!" (laughter) Slovenly said they'll do our next album so whether that means they'll pay for us to record somewhere, I dunno.
Bruce: He did offer.
Dan: He offered money to re-record some of this one.
**MRR: Do you think people like you more in Europe and the USA than here? You do OK here now, don't you? You play in front of people who don't stand there and—**
Andrew: Boo. Or throw stuff, unless it's in appreciation they throw stuff.
Dan: In America, we weren't aware that there were so many bands there that were a bit like us.
Andrew: Europe is where the SEX happened.
**MRR: How much did that cost?**
Andrew: And not just a little bit. A lot.
**MRR: Really?**
Andrew: No. Bruce kissed someone. And we all went like this: Heeeheeeheeee.
Dan: These girls who we'd met in America, and they were Austrian girls. They're in a band called the Shirley McLaines and they go to all the shows and we thought they were probably just groupies. But apparently they've never even gotten off with any band, but one of them kissed Bruce.
Andrew: And that's why the Hipshakes are the best.
Dan: Even the notorious shaggers out of some of the other bands haven't got in their pants. So Bruce did pretty well.
Andrew: Hands were everywhere!
Dan: That's the official Bruce quote: "It was great, Dan—hands were everywhere!"
**MRR: Was he not just saying "people called Hans are everywhere," cause you were in Austria?**
Andrew: We were in Germany, but yes!
**MRR: How was Christmas and New Year's in Europe?**
Dan: It was really good. There were two days we didn't play—Christmas Eve, where we watched all the BBC films back to back. And we didn't eat that day apart from a portion of chips each.
Andrew: And we went on a ferris wheel on Christmas day in the center of Groningen.
**MRR: Did you stay at Robby's [of Kiss 'n' Run]?**
Dan: Yeah.
Andrew: We got on really well with Rob and the driver, Lars. We're going back to play Rob's birthday party.
Dan: You should come to that. The Fe Fi Fo Fums are playing.
Bruce: I can't wait for that.
**MRR: So, was there a fight after you played the other week in Leeds?**
Andrew: Yes there wassssh, yes there wasssssh.
Bruce: *(in geordie accent)* A fuckin glassin.'
Andrew: I pulled them apart and I was a man for the first time in my whole life.
Dan: I just stood there. And being pretty tall, everything sort of goes past me, doesn't involve me.
Bruce: Yeah, that's an excuse.
Dan: Andrew grabbed the guy and was like, "Calm it down, man. Just calm it down." But it was the guy who was organizing our gig the next week in Bradford.
Andrew: Yeah.
**MRR: He was the "glassee?"**
Dan: No, he was the glasseur.
Andrew: The glassee was just some guy.
Dan: He was dressed as a rabbit, the guy that got glassed.
Bruce: When we saw the guy in Bradford the next week, he had bandages all over his hands so he's obviously broken some bones.
Dan: I think he might just like brawling. He paid us quite well in Bradford!

PETE MENCHETTI

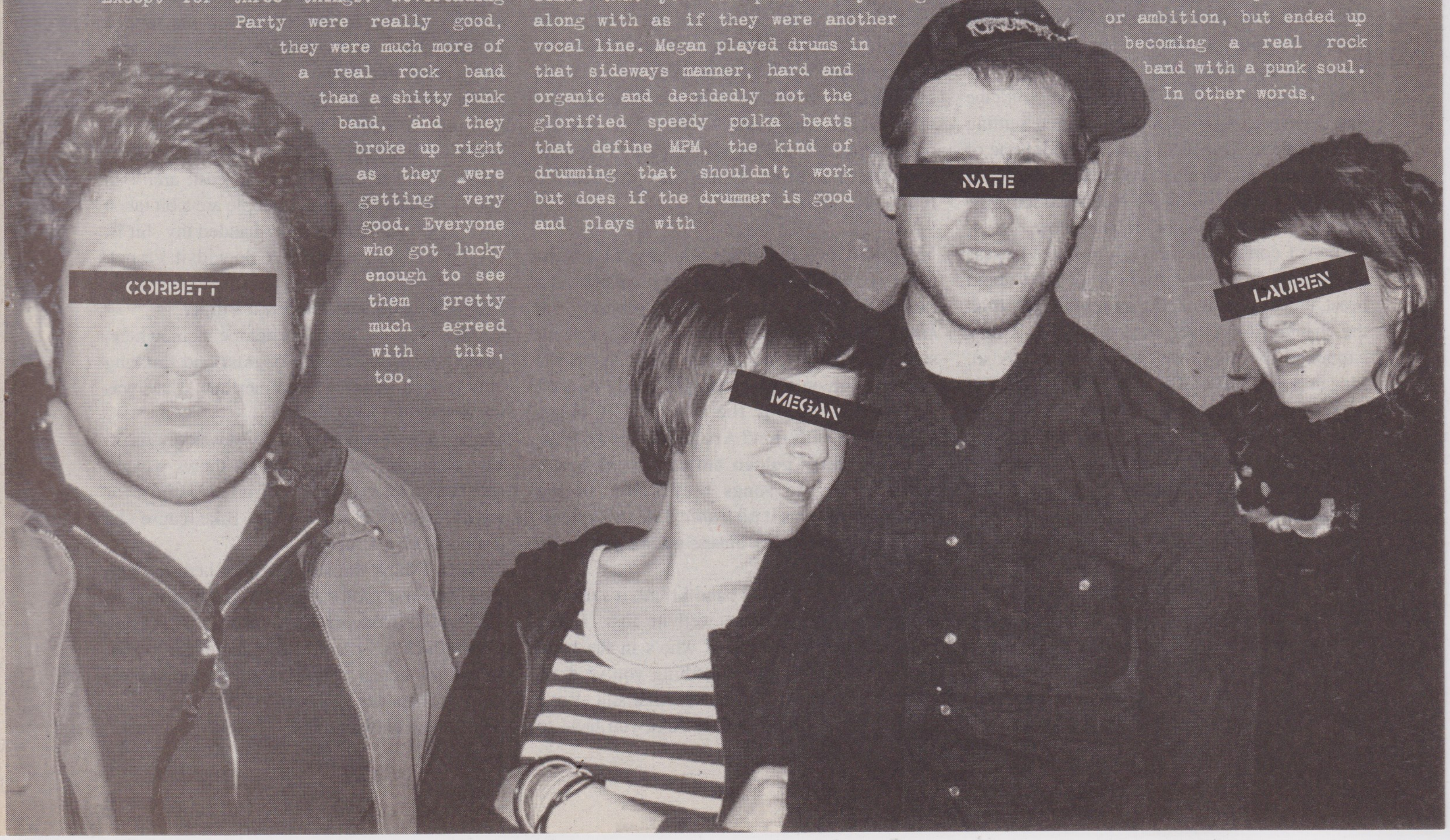
*Hipshakes have new singles on Show and Tell, Slovenly, Die Slaughterhaus and a tour split with Cococoma on Tic Tac Totally now/soon!*

# NEVERENDING PARTY is a dead band.

This Oakland/Berkeley party ended in July after an all-too-short, ten-month existence; the cops showed up, the neighbors threw bricks at the windows, exorbitant fines were handed out, and everyone stumbled drunkenly to their bikes to ride home through the ghetto at 3 am with no helmets or emergency blinkers strapped to their black backpacks. Like far too many of their contemporaries in the broke-ass, half-gentrified urban/suburban housing tracts carpeting the landscape of Modern Punk Music (MPM), Neverending Party showed up in a storm, played a bunch of shows, did a short tour, and put out a couple of seven-inch records with the help of some overly-enthusiastic weirdoes who just happen to run record labels. In other words, the story of a lot of half-assed, temporary punk bands playing the house parties and crappy bars of MPM, right? Except for three things: Neverending Party were really good, they were much more of a real rock band than a shitty punk band, and they broke up right as they were getting very good. Everyone who got lucky enough to see them pretty much agreed with this, too.

Neverending Party was one of those bands where all the elements were important. The members were friends but different enough from each other that you might not have necessarily imagined them hanging out together at a house party-even though they did; there was no unified fashion sense or predetermined gimmicky niche sound that they worked into the ground so the kids could instantly recognize it on their iPods, yet you could still tell who the band was just by listening to three seconds of any of their songs. Nate played dirty, glorious guitar with an inherent sweetness and promise for redemption underneath all the buzz and misanthropy, and he wrote the music for their songs-music that they would all tinker with until it sounded right and was owned by the band as a whole. Lauren played bass and had a knack for wringing out those catchy bass lines that you can practically sing along with as if they were another vocal line. Megan played drums in that sideways manner, hard and organic and decidedly not the glorified speedy polka beats that define MPM, the kind of drumming that shouldn't work but does if the drummer is good and plays with enough heart-I think they used to call it rock 'n' roll. Corbett was the singer, wrote most of the lyrics, and was the most instantly recognizable element of the band; his powerfully booming baritone has an uncanny knack for recalling the classic singers of Motown, but without the self-conscious hipster striving by which most people who currently attempt such emotional theater are marred. If anything, Corbett sings like that naturally and is a little uncomfortable about it. Together, they wrote songs that were kind of punk in their force and tempo but were far too soulful, well-crafted, and well-played to be relegated to the stylistic ghetto that most MPM has become.

Neverending Party seemingly set out to be yet another temporary band, a house punk band lacking any display of real talent, pretension, or ambition, but ended up becoming a real rock band with a punk soul. In other words,



Neverending Party shouldn't have broken up. They broke up because of the poor communication skills of certain members of the band, coupled with the tendency of *Modern Punk People* (MPPs) to just say whatever and view any musical project or relationship as temporary. I believe there are now a lot more MPPs than ever in our MPM who refuse to work to fix problems when something is broken, for fear of being thought of as too ambitious by their peers. In Neverending Party's case, this is a damn shame. They were a real good band that was only getting better. At least there are a couple seven-inches floating around out there; I'd advise getting copies of them now before the record-collector scum pick them all up and start selling 'em on eBay for $75 apiece. MRR got a few words out of them before the meltdown, back in early July. You can still hear them online at www.myspace.com/neverending-party, and find out anything else ya wanna know there as well...

Neverending Party interviewed by Johnny No Moniker

**MRR Alright, let's start with the basics: Name, what you do in the band, shoe size, favorite Kinks song?**

Nate: Nate, Guitar, size 13 and probably "So Mystifying."

Lauren: Lauren, Bass (fish), I have no feet, green, 30, right, Robitussin, lima beans, "Portugal."

Megan: My name is Megan March, and I play drums. I used to play without shoes, but my feet got really bruised when I did, so now I sometimes wear size seven, sometimes seven and one-half. I really like the Kinks song "Big Sky," because of their sarcastic hatred for bureaucracy, and their gift for dirty tones.

Corbett: Corbett Redford, 11, "Apeman."

**MRR: You guys played your first show last year in the back of Jon Benson's converted AC Transit Bus on Halloween as a CCR cover band. That was pretty great and all, but when you started to write your own songs it took everything up a notch and became a true rock machine. What brought about the change from cover band to the beast you have become?**

Nate: I had some songs I'd recorded on a tape that I gave to Corbett and he started putting lyrics to them. Our second show we did one of the originals and stopped doing any Creedence after that. Sadly, I think if Lauren had her way, we'd be playing at county fairs by now.

Lauren: I don't know about a machine, unless you're talking a toaster. And I don't know about beast, unless you're talking a fuzzy kitty. I think the change from cover band to what it is now happened because we wrote songs. Also, Megan doesn't like CCR, but I think that's just white guilt because we all know CCR rules. They definitely wrote better songs than we do.

Megan: That show on the bus was the first time I'd played drums in front of people since my old band, Before The Fall, broke up in 2004 after three amazing years of rocking. Around that time my dad had died, I'd just moved back from a short stint in Europe, and I *kinda* needed to just focus keeping my head above water and get through my last semester of college with no income. I was so crazy at that point; I bottled everything in my head and avoided any sort of expression, aside from some songs I wrote on guitar. With no place to practice and no will to bug my friends to start a new band, I dragged my drums wherever I moved, hoping I'd get over whatever was keeping me from playing. It's been about two years since that horrible shit happened. When Corbett and Nate asked me to play in their CCR cover band, I thought it would be a great opportunity to teach myself how to play again—and CCR rules. I'd known Corbett for years from Gilman, and I used to live with Nate and a bunch of Gilman boys, and we'd played in Six Pack Four together. I didn't know Lauren too well before we started playing together, but I knew I liked her. The problem with CCR songs is that they're really boring to drum to, so when Nate started writing I was ready to quit that shit. I liked drumming again, playing with Lauren, Nate, and Corbett was awesome, and I think that's when we became a real band instead of a Halloween party joke with animal costumes. Besides, there's only so many good CCR songs worth covering. Yep, I said it.

Corbett: I think we always had the idea to write songs together. It had been quite awhile since I had been involved with playing music and I saw the CCR thing as a chance to shake the rust off and as an opportunity to get to know everyone musically... and for me, singing "Fortunate Son" and "Bad Moon Rising" was just plain too fun to pass up.

**MRR: On a related note: You have now written a ton of original songs and have played a bunch of shows at a variety of places to all *kindsa*-size audiences. These audiences all seem to love it, and people show up to see you, yet the only place people really danced was on the bus for the damn CCR songs. What is up with that? Are punks today actually just shitty golden oldies fans at heart, only dancing to songs they know all the words to? Or was it all *ironic*, like this relentless new wave retro obsession we just keep dealing with?**

Nate: When you start a band I think it's normal for people to not react well at first. Either because of expectations of who's in the band and not sounding like something you've done already or because you played like shit. But I mean, if you live in the Bay Area you have to know CCR. No one but me seemed to have ever heard "Hey Tonight" though. Idiots.

Lauren: Punks aren't shitty golden oldies fans, unless you count Green Day as shitty golden oldies—which I do. I actually like CCR and Nate likes plaid, so no irony there. Besides, irony isn't cool anymore. Hating irony is. We really hate irony. Though we do absolutely love wearing *DARE* shirts and snorting heroin off of Corbett's knobs, but only if he's wearing a police hat and fighting us off with a lubricated billy club. Oh wait, I guess that means we like irony. Nevermind.

Megan: Who knows. Maybe it was my lizard suit, or the fuzzy chick taped to Lauren's nose. I don't think it's really something to be upset about—listening to your parents' record collection is fun (sometimes...). I think it's more about the context of a show than what the band is playing. Who cares if people are dancing? I usually can't see them anyway.

Corbett: I think people are just plain beat. Like weary and shit. It takes a lot to let loose and shake your ass. I don't blame anyone for not moving. The world construct we live in, especially in the goddamned US, does not allow for many good fuckin' feelings. I like that *commie/pinko* 8, 8, and 8 idea. Look it up. But yeah, however danceable and rockin' our music is (yeah, I said it!), my lyrics, at least, aren't so upbeat. I think sometimes people are a bit taken back by how bitter or heavy-handed my shit is. Maybe that has something to do with it. Or not.

**MRR: So who was The First Punk?**

Lauren: Just a lonely antelope somewhere, grazing on dewy mountain grass and thinking only of ball gags and summertime. Nate was the first clown punk though.

Megan: The first punk in my life was my sister, Tanya March. She took me to shows when I was little, and was (and still is) an activist for social justice. Or, my cat Dirt Bike, cause she just don't give a fuck.

Corbett: I think the real question here is, *Who was The First Clown Punk?* And the answer to that would have to be, *Whoever The First Clown Punk is... they are on Adam Opet's team.* I think the actual answer might be the Marvel Comics character, *Obnoxio*.

Nate: I hate clown punks.

**MRR: *Y'all* have all been in other bands before, Nate was in Bent Outta Shape, Megan was in Before The Fall, Corbett was in Bobby Joe Ebola And The Children MacNuggits, Lauren was in Monster Friend etc...but Neverending Party doesn't sound like any of them, beyond the fact that they can all *very* loosely fall under the rubric of rock and roll and punk rock sans keyboards. I know this is something of a cliché question, but how do you think your experiences (musical and otherwise) in these previous bands have shaped your approach to Neverending Party?**

Nate: Touring all the time with Bent is how I learned to play guitar. I've been in bands forever now but when you're either practicing all the time or playing shows all week, everyone in the band should know what you're going to play next. You're with each other all the time and you've played the same song until you think it's the best or worst thing ever. Aside from playing around the Bay Area for years, none of us really played in anything that similar to each other. Kool Teen was pretty garage-y sounding, Bobby Joe was acoustic, Before The Fall was one of the best punk bands playing around, and I've always been in bands that are like Hüsker Dü- or Replacements-style. What really makes sense is that we've all played around a lot more than anything else.

Lauren: I really think we'd benefit from someone blowing into an empty jug whenever the mood hit them.

Megan: In Before The Fall I learned that the only band worth being in is one with friends. When I play, I play with all heart, and it's *kinda* personal. I can only do that with people I'm comfortable with, otherwise I suck. Before The Fall was the first band I played drums in, and I learned as we went along. Practicing was easy cause Ben and I liked hanging out and we just got better by default. Also, since I'd played guitar and bass before, I approached writing for drums from a tonal perspective aside from rhythm. Before The Fall was mostly a two-piece, so the guitar and drum elements both needed to hold their own. Playing in Neverending Party is less of a struggle 'cause drumming is like riding a bike, and I'm learning to use the drums to accent the other instruments, instead of being one of two voices.

Corbett: I always wanted to be in a straight-up rock outfit. My old band was a bit of an acoustic anomaly, kind of like therapy in front of everyone or the world's longest poop joke or something. I wanted to be part of a guitar/drum/bass thing, put out some 45s and do something where I could write a bit more seriously and less cryptically about my life experiences.

**MRR How are the songs written? Gimme a little rundown of the process. Who handles the artwork?**

Nate: Usually, Corbett will give me lyrics and I'll start writing a song around them. The artwork for the Freedom School seven-inch was by Jamie and Mike Hunchback. Everyone from both bands kind of did stuff for the Reaction split.

Lauren: Nate and Corbett work their magic during long isolated *sessions* into which they only bring Nyquil, a little brass buddha, two pairs of elf booties, and a pillowcase. One time I also saw an empty box of brillo pads. Who knows? Also, I like stealing chord progressions from a Beethoven piano book I got when I was 8. Artwork is kind of a mixed bag, though I think we're definitely going to photocopy our junk for the next record.

Megan: Nate usually brings in a song, and we all work on it. We all wrote "Vallejo" together. For the most part everyone writes their own parts and it seems to work out.

Corbett: Nate-rs is the dude! Either he hands me a tape with a song or two on it and I write some words to it or I hand him some words and he throws a great song back at me. He is a fuckin' wizard. Not like David Duke or nothin'. Like the magical and robed kind. We bring the stuff to the girls and they change words or parts or titles sometimes and add new parts and the *rocksauce*. *Eeww...*

**MRR: Where do you record, and what is the process there? The recordings seem to capture the live energy pretty well, with the band's power and organic, *loose-yet-together* feel intact. Is it mostly recorded live or are there a lot of overdubs?**

Lauren: We mostly have been recording with my roommate Brett who rules and has a cool little studio in his bedroom. And he really knows his shit and is so patient and tactful and knowledgeable, three things which the rest of us definitely aren't, so he schools us and we are eternally grateful to him. The recordings capture the live energy because we record them live, except with the amps in different loca-

tions to lessen bleed (guitar amp in bathroom, bass amp in my bedroom). Corbett overdubs vocals. Nate overdubs 47 guitar tracks plus tuba, sex noise, and the sound of clubbing baby harp seals.

Megan: I like recording with Brett because he's on the level. Most of his mics are homemade, he's a self-made engineer, and really easy to work with. We basically take over his bedroom, eat candy, drink beer, bitch about the headphones, and do about three live takes per song. For our last few recordings we've tried to keep the sound true to a live performance. I'm hoping that we'll soon be able to break out of the box and finally add in the ambiance synth noise, clap tracks, and snare overdubs to achieve our intended vision. That way, we can remove our limbs, sit in jello, and program all of our songs into ProTools. Seriously.

**MRR: So what's the deal with Freedom School, who put out the first seven-inch? It seems like a decent label. How about Thrillhouse, who are putting out the split seven-inch with The Reaction? Are you guys gonna do a full-length soon, and if so with who?**

Nate: Freedom School is Mike from New Jersey Heroes Hunchback's label. We played together in Bent and lived in the same apartment building when I was in New York. He heard one of our songs and about a month later he put the record out. It was really awesome of him to do. Thrillhouse is a great new record store in the Mission. Writing all the songs for a full length is going to take some time. It took about a year for us to get the ten songs we have now. So I think we'll have to see what happens.

Lauren: Freedom School is America's source for music. Apparently there is talk of doing a full-length but I was under the impression we had to write new songs to be able to do that. Unless we're just going to record a 40 minute version of "The Flame" and then we could just use that for a full-length, maybe with background vocals by all the children of the world holding hands and weeping as one.

Corbett: Mike from Freedom School is a genuinely cool dude. I've never met him, but we both share a love for creepy kitsch and obscure, strange old music. He really did our record up too. Everything was ready when we expected it and he already has ads out. It is so rad of him to be on top of everything. High hopes that we do something else with him soon. Thrillhouse Records is a really fun place. It started as a record store in January 2007 and as a label in June 2007. I do the production work for the place, calling factories, layout, etc. and volunteer there…hence the split, I guess. Come visit the store!

**MRR: Where'd you get your band name? Is it really from that ridiculous *YouTube* video?**

Nate: I personally did not know it was from a video. We were talking about names on the porch one day and Corbett said Neverending Party and it was better than anything else anyone had said yet, so we all shook on it. About five minutes later he said it was a video. That's how I remember it. Lauren says something different though.

Lauren: It's from *Free Willy*. You'd get the reference if you knew anything about great films.

Megan: What's in a name? Do The Flaming Lips have herpes? Were Dead Moon wiccan reapers? Are Fleshies all strippers? I know there are great bands that are hindered by shitty names, and shitty bands that are still shitty with great names, but a party is something everybody likes—unless you're a party pooper, in which case fuck off.

Corbett: It is a pet name for the upcoming revolution. What video? I don't know what you're talking about. Leave me alone!

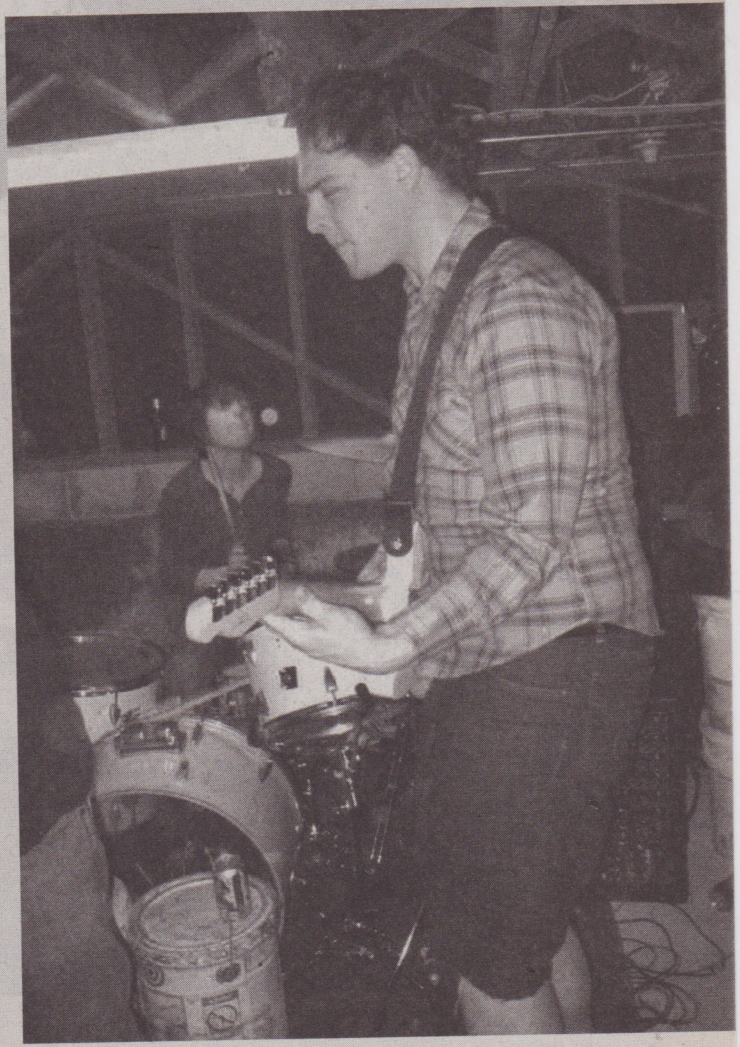
**MRR: All four of you are cranky (punk) rock dorks with huge music collections/knowledge, and the cover songs you choose to do are always pretty great (Joan Jett, The Kinks, Replacements, etc.) and pretty deliberately chosen. You all seem keenly aware of these musicians' ability to write great, soulful, irony-free rock music that punks really like but without the limitations that the label *punk* can put on bands. So this is sort of a weird question, but...Is the fact that your original material also has this non genre-based, consistent and recognizable real rock power to it an equally deliberate approach, or is it more of an inadvertent phenomenon resulting from your individual approaches to music? Or is it some combo thereof?**

Nate: I think it's a more a combo maybe. None of us really listen to or like a lot of what the others listen to. Lauren likes The Flaming Lips and The Melvins, Megan likes riot grrl style and old Bay Area punk, Corbett likes AC/DC and The Ink Spots, and I like old '60s rock, power pop and most of all my friends' bands. I'd say more than anything, listening to a band like Lefty Loosie is going to inspire me to write a song like they would. Kind of like what the Big Boys would do when they would tour with a band. The song "No" is obviously inspired by "Slip It In," you know? So there's a similar thing going on in everything we like, I guess. I don't know if that answers anything though. More than any-

thing, I think we sound like Dead Moon or Hüsker Dü. That's what I try for anyhow.
Lauren: I'm pretty sure we rip off the bands we like a lot, but that's nothing new. We all have distinct styles of what we do, so distinct to the point of us not be able to play together as a cohesive band most of the time. But that's intentional. We're really an *arte-rock band*, so I would have to argue that, no, you can't just label us and put us in a box, goddammit! We're expressing ourselves as individuals through our arte. I'm an *artiste* and I'm kicking everyone else out of the band because they don't understand me. I also really, *really* like cupcakes.
Megan: What is punk music anyways? Plenty of punks don't listen to punk music, so why should we be stuck playing it? Honestly, I couldn't play a blast beat to save my life. I naturally learned to play rock drums, I can't help it, but I'm still a punk. Besides, limitations in punk are ironic anyway because punk is about doing what you feel like outside of the norm. So really, punk should be limitless, right? You're right though; a musician is always influenced by what they like, duh. It seems like even though we all hang out in the same scene, go to the same shows, that the four of us have different influences that go beyond punk. Maybe that's also why we stopped playing CCR covers, cause then we could bring all of our own influences together, without the *limitations* of 4/4. I think that in this band, what we do is pretty non *deliberate* in the sense that we're not trying to fit somewhere, 'cause we're playing the only way we know how to. For better or worse, it just kinda happened that way. Your right though, the only thing the covers we do now have in common is that they're cranky.
Corbett: You're right. I think we just like well-written rock songs. Nate has a crazy collection of badass rock vinyl and has brought quite a few of the covers to the table. Megs chose our Replacements cover. We try to learn a new one every few months. It helps keep things fun for us to cover old songs that we like. I think the punk thing just happens…like when you're drunk or pissed, or piss-drunk, punk just comes through. And I think it just so happens to be a time in history where there are a lot of reasons to be pissed or drunk or both. So I *go punk* a lot. I would never on purpose, only as reflex, of course…*winkwink.* We like the rock. We play rock. We cover rock songs. Did I mention... rock?

**MRR: On a related note: You guys are not fashion kids of any stripe, and you don't even dress at all like each other. Do you feel that, today, bands are at a disadvantage who are not clearly niche-marketed into some kind of independent sub-scene, identifiable by derivative music and a uniform, recognizable clothes style? Or is that ultimately more of an advantage?**
Nate: I don't really think it matters. None of us have probably ever changed our clothes style. Maybe Corbett. He's started dressing like a skinhead. I'm growing my hair back out so I look like I'm 17 again. I think I was the first longhair. Back then it wasn't cool though. Now everyone thinks I'm the *Herky Jerky Dancer*. But I can't dance.
Lauren: What we all have in common is that we all rarely wear socks. If this is our niche-market, then I say, OK, fuck socks.
Megan: We don't tell each other how to play our instruments, so why would we tell each other how to dress? We all like animal suits, but when I see perfectly manicured mohawks, matching shaggy haircuts, I start wondering what these people look like on their days off from the band. Do they look at themselves in the mirror Monday morning through their crusty eye make-up, and ask themselves, *will my friends still think I'm cool after my band breaks up*?
Corbett: I would hope our approach would be an advantage. I wish people would stop giving a shit about the band in the matching black military garb complete with white-star patches and pink epaulets but it *ain't gonna* happen. Maybe if we get Nate in some *Daisy Dukes* more people will buy our t-shirts...

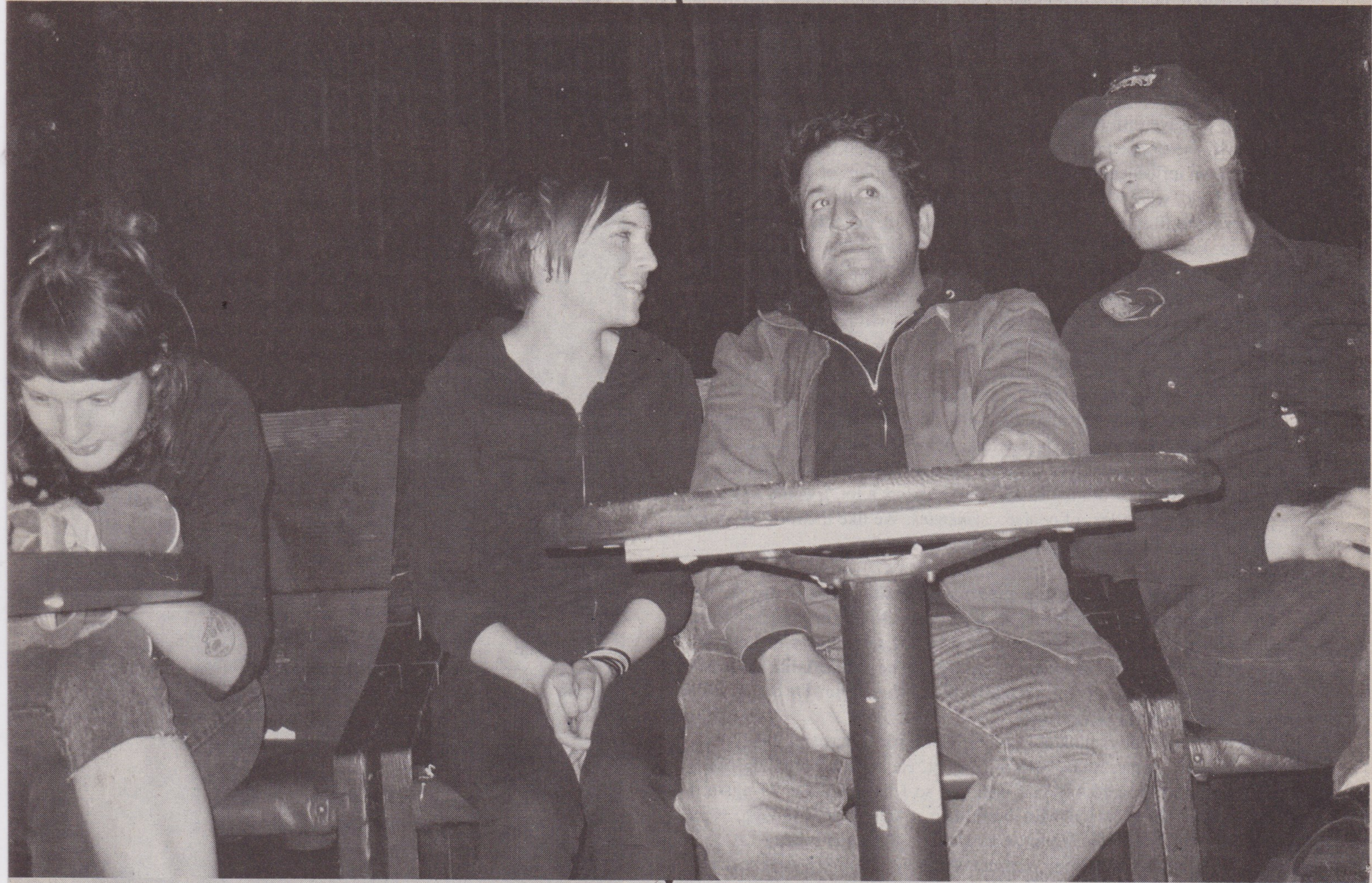
**MRR: Who do you see as some of your closest musical compatriots? This doesn't necessarily mean influences, although you can talk about that if you want, but I'd rather know who you think your true peers are today.**
Nate: For me I couldn't be more happy doing a split with The Reaction. We don't really sound alike but we're kind of doing the same thing. Wade's old bands have always been a big influence on me too.
Lauren: I've loved playing with the few metal bands we've gotten to play with like Orb Of Confusion. I consider us to be dark and angry and bloodthirsty, which is why we fit into those shows like a sweet and supple rump fits in my outstretched and coke-powdered hands. Speaking of supple asses and coke, we've had a really great time with bands from Portland, both there and here so I'll name-drop. I've loved playing multiple shows with Thee Electric Witch, The Unit Breed, and Drunken Boat. We are always super happy to play with these bands because they are all amazing and all wonderful, humble, creative, warm, welcoming, sexy, sweaty,



enormously busty, and have bountiful and rippling muscle mass encased in firm, trembling, evenly tanned, and totally hairless bronzed skin that feels like freshly oiled pleather beneath my ravenous fingertips, and their farts smell like brownies.
Megan: I like what my friend's bands are doing, there's a lot of good music happening in the Bay Area right now, Portland too. I don't really listen to recorded music much, so a good live show gets me juiced.
Corbett: I like The Reaction a lot. They are a straight-up rock band coming from a punk place and all the while they keep their poetic nature and progressive, thoughtful stance. They also aren't afraid to call upon their influences in both song and presentation. I dig the mod thing in their art and sound. When is Northern Soul coming back? I think our peers are folks like The Reaction, Triclops, Thee Electric Witch...tripped-out shit,

actually. Shit that doesn't sound like East Bay punk circa 1992…? I love that stuff, but I'm kind of tired of hearing it coming out of new bands all the time.

**MRR: Corbett, your lyrics range from loving testimonies for friends to scathing indictments of enemies to ruminations on girls (plus, of course, there's one about your cat Alice). They all, however, seem to have some pretty great stories behind them. There are two I wanna know a little bit more about: "Healthy Competition" and "Vallejo." Can you break down the stories of these a little?**
Corbett: "Healthy Competition" is about an old friend of mine. Without getting into too much bitter acrimony, this guy and I stopped being friends because I didn't understand what he wanted from me. Every move I made seemed to be greeted with harsh judgment by him or some kind of muddled righteousness. It was confusing and ultimately kind of too dark for me to try to keep understanding where he was coming from anymore. I'm a dark enough bastard on my own. So we stopped being friends. I still feel his squeezes from time to time but I don't care when I do anymore. It is kind of a nice feeling. "Vallejo" is about how one relationship I had a few years ago had begun to resemble a few others I have had in recent years. It is basically about recognizing patterns and stopping them. I like the chorus because it is kind of cryptic, confusing and wordy, but it is literally what happened at the beginning and the end of said initial relationship.



**MRR: Where are your favorite places to tour and play locally?**
Nate: Thrillhouse is really fun to play. Everyone's too drunk to tell whether you suck or not. That's my favorite kind of show I think, no matter where. We mostly play bars though.
Lauren: This question is easy. I like to play anywhere that gives us free drinks and food.
Megan: I've played kitchen tables, basements, living rooms, bedrooms, store counters, bathroom stalls, backyards, Native American reservations, parks, outdoor stages, and landfills; and they are my favorite. Since I play loudly, I usually can't hear anything but myself, but whatever. Music doesn't require a stage, but they're fun too. From growing up in Oakland, Gilman will always be sacred to me. I volunteered doing sound there, and now I work in the city at Bottom of the Hill, and Annie's Social Club—two places I also feel at home playing at. I like touring the two coasts the most, cause the middle requires a lot of driving, and I've got a license. Hopefully I'll get over that.
Corbett: I love San Pedro. I miss the Region, the ol' dirty South!! New York. I hope we get out there. I like playing Annie's Social Club, Thrillhouse Records and Pine Street in Oakland too!

**MRR: When is a full national tour coming?**
Lauren: You said coming.
Megan: When people buy more of our stupid keg shirts so we can buy a jet plane.

**MRR: Any final comments?**
Lauren: You said anal.
Nate: Bossy rules.
Megan: Blah bleb blush bleh.
Corbett: I miss Hickey.

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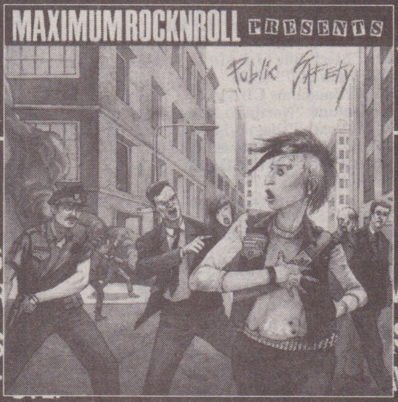


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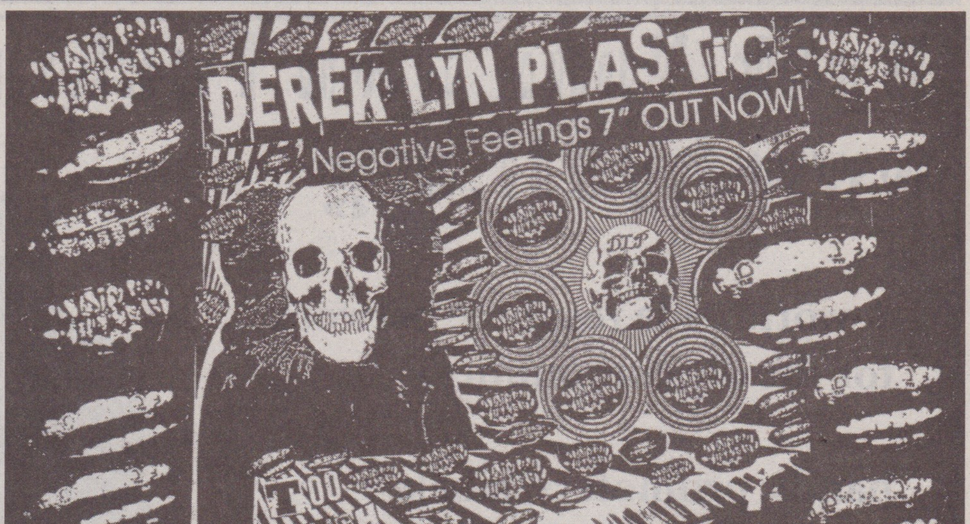

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# TRUCKS, DESERTS, & BORDER WALLS: ONE PUNK'S JOURNEY FROM LIMA TO NEW YORK

*Sandro was interviewed by Esneider on August 2, 2007, in Manhattan. This is part two of his story; the first part was published in the October issue of* MRR. *Translated from the Spanish by Jane G.*

*Part 2: Oaxaca to NYC*

S: So that night we went out with the guide, and he took us to a cargo truck terminal, where he had already arranged with certain drivers to take us. You know that on the trucks, the driver goes in the front part and behind him is a kind of bunk bed... That trailer was going from there, from the south, from Oaxaca, all the way to the DF (the federal district, Mexico City) without stopping. So my friend and I, they had us get in a truck carrying Kellogg cereal, just the two of us. And the driver, and his co-pilot, who was his dad. And the driver started to tell us, in a friendly way, this and that...and the guide gives you 2,500 Mexican pesos ($250) to pay this guy when he leaves you in the DF. The guide tells you, you're going to notice that you're in the DF when you start to see green taxis.

The driver asks us if we want coffee, tells us the trip is going to be long, there will be moments when we pass through a checkpoint, I'm going to have to lift up the bed, you guys are going to have to get into the bed and I'll close the door, but don't worry, it has great ventilation on both sides. OK.

We're on the road for like a half-hour when at the side of the road we see this family. Shit. They were Hondurans, a husband and wife, and two kids, one of them was special, he had some special illness, and they had another baby, a third kid, in their arms, who was like eight or nine months old. Damn. And this guy, the driver, stops and offers to take them, because they had been left dumped on the street; it seems like the guy who was taking them had just dumped them. So, in the upper part of the truck cab, there is an even smaller space than the one below. And the upper part, this guy tells them, that's the only space I have for you, settle yourselves in there; and they fit themselves into that space, shit. And I felt bad because there we were below them, just two of us, so I said to the Honduran guy, send your two kids down here, and you and your wife can stay up there with the baby. So he sent his kids down with us.

We're going to pass through a checkpoint. We have to lift up the bunk bed, and fit ourselves under the bed, all of us. And the guy closed it up, and closed the curtains. And we passed the checkpoint, all normal. And that guy, it seems like he changed his mind along the way, and he tells the family, you know what? The truth is, I'm not going to be able to take you any farther, because I don't know if they're your kids, and two, what happens if something happens to them on the way? So I'll drop you off in the next town, and that's it. So how much is it, they ask. No, nothing, just get out, that's all. So we left them in a town; all I remember about them is that they were Hondurans. And from there we continued. That trip took us like three days, that section from southern Mexico to the DF, damn, it was long... For three days it dragged on. And in those three days, the guy was fucking great, we stopped at restaurants and he invited us to eat, at night we stopped to drink coffee, when we wanted to go to the bathroom, the guy stopped and waited for us, everything.

So that's how we got to the DF. And as we were getting there, the guy stops at the place where he has to leave his cargo. We arrived before dawn, and the guy said I'm going to leave this shit here, tomorrow I'll come unload it. So get out and let's go to my house. Because from here to the actual center of Mexico City was about a half-hour drive still. When we were going to get out of the car, we see that a cop car is approaching, and it stops there, at our side. So the guide says come to the back, come to the back, and we went to the back, and the cop was just asking him if he had traveled OK or if he had been robbed, and he said no, so the cop asks so everything was OK, no problems? Yes, he tells him, no problems. OK, good.

So we waited a minute and then the driver says, I have my car there, I'm going to bring it, so we don't have too many problems, and you'll get in and we'll go to my house. Then it starts to rain. The guy brings his little car, he puts us in the back with his dad who was sleeping, and we went to his house. At his house, the guy asks us if we're hungry, and invites us to eat a peace of cake, coffee, soda, then he says you know what, I'm going to leave you in such-and-such a place, and from there you guys will take a taxi to get where you have to go, because you guys aren't going to the DF itself, you have to go to another place, right? On top of all that, the guy tells me, before they had said it would cost us 2,500 pesos, but now he says it's 2,000. So we paid him the 2,000 Mexican pesos, 4,000 in total for the two

of us, and he leaves us in a place, and he stops the taxi, and pays the taxi driver, and the taxi leaves us where we have to be. And we get there, I remember the place was called Panteon San Lorenzo, in Mexico, they had told us get out at the Panteon San Lorenzo, and once you're there call this number, and they'll come and get you. So that's what happened. We got to the Panteon San Lorenzo, called this man, he came to get us, and he took us to a house.

It was like a residential complex, where he lived on the second floor, and in this house there were nothing but Peruvians. There were like eight Peruvians aside from us. In a small space...but the good thing about this house is that it had like a triple bunk bed, so there was more space to sleep, with the triple bunk bed and mattresses on the floor, and a television. And on top of that because we were all Peruvians, we got to eat Peruvian food.

**MRR: Oh yeah?**
S: Of course, this guy was Peruvian, and he cooked. It was like, what do you want to eat? Damn, we'd say *ají de gallina* [a traditional Peruvian spicy chicken dish], and he would cook it. What do you want to eat? *Lomo (saltado)* [a traditional Peruvian beef stir-fry dish]. And he would cook it. There was more freedom, like we could even go into the living room and watch TV. But when someone comes to the door, everyone has to hide. We were there for like two weeks. Until we said to the guide, we have no more money, get us out of here already...

**MRR: Two weeks?**
S: Two weeks. From there, he got us out; he said, we have to take you all to the ground transportation terminal of Mexico City. Damn, in my country, we don't have central bus terminals, each agency has its own terminal. But from Central America to here, everywhere there are central bus terminals. So we have to go to the north bus terminal. We go there, it's a whole trip, we take the microbus, and the microbus takes us to another place, and from there we take the metro; on the metro, we make a transfer, get out somewhere, take another microbus, until we reach the north bus terminal.

**MRR: Of course, to the north bus terminal, and I'm sure you were in the south of the city.**
S: Yes, and at the north terminal, they told us to buy our first class tickets and a guy was going to wait for us there, and he would be dressed a certain way, and he was going to take the bus with us and every time he got out we had to get out. So that trip from the DF to Chihuahua took two days. Because this guy didn't take a direct route, he traveled in a zigzag pattern, from here, to one state, and from that state to another state, in a zigzag. Until we got to Chihuahua.

In Chihuahua, this guide made the driver stop on the highway, and there he told us to wait for him, and he left. After a while, he came back in a pickup truck to get us—he had us get in the back of the pickup and we go off along the highway, and then he takes off into the desert, shit. So we thought we were already on the border with the United States. No, but we were in Chihuahua, in the desert of Chihuahua. Shit, and in the middle of the desert there was a kind of oasis, and that's where this guy lived with his wife and daughters. There was a house, and they also had a camper next to the house, and that's where they had the illegals. They had had about 15 there, but that night we were only four, so the four of us stayed in the house. And we were there for another two weeks. My trip, just that part of it when I was in Mexico, lasted like a month; I crossed through Central America in about a week and from Arizona to New York, I did it in like a week. The whole trip took me two months.

Shit, at that point I was totally regretting it, because it was a desert, there wasn't shit to do there. Every time we wanted water, we had to ask the woman to give us water, to give us something to eat, just waiting for the guide to come and get us out of there.

Before dawn one morning I heard a car arrive, vrooom, and I heard the door open, someone gets out, says bye, the car leaves. Then the man of the house tells us, boys, you're leaving now, get ready because you're leaving for Sonora. What do you mean for Sonora, aren't we in Sonora already? No, we're in Chihuahua. Sonora's still a ways away. Shit!

We also had a problem there, a bigger problem, with the owner of the house—it was the same problem we had had the whole trip, but much worse. Not for me, but for everyone else. Because the others, I don't know why they were in such a hurry to ask their families to send money, and the families sent it. But the one who collected the money was the guide. The guide always kept part of it. And when we were in Chihuahua, one of us had asked his family to send him 200 dollars. And his family sends him 200 dollars. But they did it in the name of this guy, the owner of the house. And this guy had collected the 200 dollars, but hadn't given him the money. Every day he postponed it, he'd say ""tomorrow I'll give it to you, tomorrow I'll give it to you.""

So that day we were going to leave for the border, the guy whose money it was goes and asks the woman for his money, since the man wasn't there. And the woman pretends she knows nothing about it, so he tells her well then you better call your husband. Then the woman starts calculating a bill, she says, look, you've eaten this much, and... OK, fine. But she not only charged him things that he had eaten but also things we had all eaten, that were supposedly paid for. And with all that stuff the woman charged him for, she ended up keeping the whole 200 dollars. Shit.

To get from Chihuahua to Sonora, we took a bus. For this, the guide gives you 500 Mexican pesos. At each checkpoint, you have to pay 200 pesos. We were going to pass two checkpoints. And 100 pesos was for the driver, if he charged us. We get to a police checkpoint, and they take everyone off the bus. To everyone who has a Mexican ID, they say get back on the bus. Everyone who didn't have ID, they take us to a booth, and they say, OK, put it here, you know what it is. And everyone has to take out their 200 pesos and put it on the table, and get back on the bus. That's the fee. Farther on, the soldiers stop us, and it's the same thing, up front, in the open, they say it's 200 pesos, that's it. They charge you, and then they let you get back on the bus.

And when we're arriving in Sonora,

another cop stops us, but just to ask us if we're so-and-so's people, and we say yes. And he calls someone on the phone, says OK, yes, your people are here, they've arrived. And he lets us pass.

And we get to the bus station in Sonora, and when you get to the bus station in Sonora you have to be really careful. Your guide always goes ahead of you. But along the way, there are always people trying to pull you away, as if you were a valuable piece of merchandise. And they steal people from each other so they can demand money. Luckily none of that happened to us.

We're in Sonora, and the guide says we're going to walk a few blocks and we're going to take a taxi and we're going to go to the house. We walked a few blocks, we took the taxi, we got to a place, to a house, which appeared to be an abandoned house. The guide said push the door open and go in. And I pushed the door really hard and we went in. And shit, in that house there were at least 70 people. Shit, on one mattress five people slept sideways. On the floor, you had to look for your own spot to sleep. And I remember that a man stood up and he asks us where we're from, and we tell him where we're from, and he asks us if we had eaten and we tell him no, and the guy goes to the kitchen, and opens the door in the kitchen and brings out drinks and bread with ham. Eat, he says. And when you're done eating, lay down wherever you can find a spot. That was at night. The next day when we got up, that house was even more full of people, shit. That house had four rooms, including the kitchen. But the four rooms, including the bathroom, were full of people. Shit...

**MRR: That was a town, or in the countryside?**

S: No, it was already right on the border. Ten minutes from the border, from the wall, and about 20 minutes from the immigration offices. And the next day... The people who were in that house were people who had been returned from Los Angeles. In Los Angeles they had been arrested and sent back. The good thing about it is that at that time, there was a kind of repatriation amnesty. Maybe it's still in effect?

**MRR: No, not anymore.**

S: If you wanted, they would return you to your hometown, or if you wanted they would just leave you on the border. At that time, you could still choose that thing, and at the border they would ask you where you want to go, to your town...because supposedly when you cross the border you have to say you are Mexican. And for that they give you some lessons, like classes, about Mexico. Like the national anthem, the history, the slang, how you say this or that thing, how you say the belt, the belt-loops, the sneakers. So those people had been sent back from Los Angeles, and that's why the house was full.

So the day after we arrived, those people were going to leave. But there were only eleven of them. So the coyote said no, I need more people. So they put us in that group. But because there were so many people there, they said no, we're going to take two groups. One group of 15, and the other group also of 15. So that night they took us out.

They took us out to walk before dawn, they took us in a car to the desert, and we went along a kind of bridge but underneath, that supposedly water runs through, right? But it was summertime, and there was no water. It was dry, and we walked on it. And we were walking, walking... until dawn broke, and the guides told us, you know what, we're going to rest. We lay down to sleep around six in the morning and they woke us up around 9:30, and said now we're going to keep walking. Then it started to rain, but rain like I've never seen before in my life. A torrential rain, shit! Torrential, torrential.

**MRR: And had you already crossed the line at that point?**

S: Yes, we had already crossed the line. But we were in the Arizona desert. So we walked, and walked. And those canals that you had already seen before, dry, they picked up the water and they were full. And the water reached up to your waist. And since it came from the mountains, from higher up, it came with a current... Hell, to get through that shit, it was terrible. So we managed to cross all that, and there were like 30 of us, right? As long as you could see the guide ahead, you could go forward. A moment came when the guide took us to a hidden place, at the base of a hill, and he said, ""wait, wait."" A minute later we heard the sound of motorcycles. So what happened was that the *migra* had come and they were on motorcycles, above us. But they didn't see us because down below there was a hole and we were all in there. And the *migra* was there for like half an hour, then they said something in English, one said to the other that there was nothing there, and they left.

The guys left, and the guide said, we're going to keep walking. We kept walking, shit, we climbed up this huge mountain. From there we went down, we walked over mountains, until far away we saw a highway. And the guide told us we had to get to that spot. We went down the mountain, down, down, until we got to the highway, we were on one side of it. So the guide said, we're going to wait until it gets dark, we have to go to the other side of the highway. Everything got dark, and they signaled to each other with the lights of their cell phones. We crossed to the other side of the highway, and the man had a place like an open field there, which it seemed like he used to let people rest. So he left us there, said tomorrow I'll come for you, and they left. Just like these guys appear, that's how they go. They disappear. Then you see them walking somewhere on a hillside.

Shit, that night it was fucking freezing, and the next day it was shit hot and we were hungry. And we remembered that when the guide told us we had to get to that highway, we thought that as soon as we got to the highway there was going to be a car waiting and it would take us to the closest city. So we dumped everything. So then we selected two people to go back to the place we had been, to pick up some stuff: water, and cans of tuna, which is what they give you for the walk. So those guys went, and brought back the water and the tuna. With that we could get through the day. And night came and we lay down to sleep, and the next day, around six in the afternoon, already almost dusk, they arrive and say ""OK, no we're really going."" We divided into groups of two. We went down to the highway, and one group went on one side of the road, and the other group

on this side. When the truck comes, and I tell you to get in, you all get in. For this, they teach you how to fit yourselves in. There were two ways to do it: one way was the onion, which was to sit with your legs open, and the other fits in between your legs, or you could lay down in sardine formation, which was one with their head up this way and the other with their head facing the other way. So they said, you're going to get in there in sardine formation.

So the car gets there, but that highway had a lot of traffic. They had to wait until not a single car was passing. And then when the car gets there they say get in, and you had to get in fast, and that car closes its doors and takes off.

Damn, I remember that I was looking at the sky, and the trees passing by at full speed, and the lights of the other cars too... That car went through a section of really bad road. And we fell asleep, then after a while we heard the car stop, under a tree, and we heard the doors open, they get out, the doors close, and we hear people talking. And I said, we've arrived. I thought we had arrived. When I see this guy with an American accent, he was speaking Spanish, he asked us where we were from, and whether we were all Mexicans, and whether we had weapons or drugs. We said no, and OK, get out, and shit, that's when I realized that it was the *migra*. They had caught us. And since it was the first time I had been arrested, I was scared. But the fear started to go away as the minutes passed, because I saw that despite everything, they were friendlier. In the end, more cars arrived, they put us in the cars, they locked us up in the car, but before this they searched each of us, all of us, from head to toe, then they put us in the car and took us to an immigration detention center. We get out, they take your information, your fingerprints, they ask you where you're from, all that. So once you're there, they start to select you, and they put you in the cells. Which are like rooms with glass doors, they can see everything. In the middle of all these rooms there's like a supervision center, and from there they can see all the rooms. On top of that all the rooms have cameras, all that. And when they put you in these detention cells, shit, all the rooms are full of mud and sand, and it's incredibly cold, since it was summer, and these guys on purpose turn the air conditioning way up. So inside it's fucking freezing.

Anyway, they don't do anything to you, they just photograph you and take your information, all that, they ask you if you're hungry, and after a while they bring your sandwich and your Gatorade, and the next day the same thing. A day after we got there, a representative of the Mexican consulate came to that detention center, he talked to us, he asked us if we were all Mexicans, we told him yes, we're all Mexicans, he talked to us about the amnesty, If you want, you can return to your town, but if you want they can dump you there on the border. Where do you want to go? So we told him the border, the border, OK, everyone's going to the border, if you're going to try to come back across the border, shit, I wish you luck, blah blah blah.

So here when you're finally ready to go to the border, they put you on a bus, like those ones they use for prisoners, when you get on it they videotape you, and they have three metal doors there that they close, so they put us all in there, the driver gets in, explains to us that we better not think about doing anything, because everything is being videotaped...

I got lucky, they left me on the border near a place called Casa Grande. When I got to Casa Grande, there was a sign that says Phoenix: 50 miles. We were really close to Phoenix. So they sent me back across the border to a place called Naco. But there were other people who got dumped in another place called Nogales that's farther away. And other people got dumped over in Tijuana, that's even farther away. They take them there and they dump them. So they dumped me over there in Nogales, and luckily I had the phone number of the guide from Sonora. I called him, he said wait, take a taxi, tell him to leave you at this number avenue, and I was happy. He said how many are you? We're eight. OK. We take a taxi, we get to the house, get out, call the guide, the guide comes out, pays and the taxi leaves.

I remember it was August 14, 2004. From the vans that were there, every two or three days people would leave. But ten would leave, and eight would return. Fifteen would leave, and ten would return.

**MRR: The same people?**

S: The same people. I didn't like that. I said, I'm going to wait for the right moment. And one day they take us out to walk, but this time at another place. They said you know what, you're going to jump the fence, jumping the fence you're going to get to a Burger King, and at the Burger King you guys are going to call me and we're going to arrive in a car, and then we'll leave.

In this group we were only three people. We got up on the roof of a house, and that house had a tree, and from that tree you could jump the fence. So when the first guy jumps, not even 30 seconds passes when boom, the *migra* shows up and arrests him. And the coyote said no, you know what, we can't do it tonight, we're going back. And we went back. Then on my third try, we left with three people, and that guy took us to another place, where the train goes by.

But that walk also failed, because before we crossed the line, we were waiting for nightfall to cross, when this guy shows up with a weapon and robs us of everything we had. I had like 40 dollars. He took it. The other guy was married, he had his engagement ring, he had a chain, the thief took it, took his wallet.

And the guide said, we can't cross like this. We went back to the house. When we were in the house, all the people who were there, little by little they were crossing, crossing, ten of us were left, then eight, seven... Then when we were seven, one night the house was empty, and that night three guys with guns came in. And they took everything. All the clothes from everyone who was there, our shoes, the little money we had, the television. The coyote who guarded the house had a radio, they took that. They took everything, everything. Because of that, the coyote says, you know what, I don't like this, maybe it's better if I go work in another place. So he talked to the guy who was going to get us across and said please take these people because I'm not going to be here anymore, so the coyote looked for a guide, and made him take us across, the three of us. We crossed with the guide, walking. Whatever happens, happens, he said.

So this guide says we're going to walk a little, but we're going to walk fast. And once we're inside, I have a place where we're going to walk all night and nothing will happen to us, and we're going to get to...you see that town

up ahead? Yes. That town is called Douglas, and we're going to get there, and when we're there, I'm going to take you to Phoenix in the truck. And from Phoenix you're going to continue your trip. OK.

Damn, we left to walk at five in the afternoon, it was fucking hot, and we were walking, walking, walking, when shit, we see a helicopter. It was following us. A minute later, we hear the sound of motorcycles and cars. And they were following us. And then the guide says shit, run, because we were in a place with hardly any vegetation. We had to run to a place that had more vegetation. So we started to run, and since there were four of us, it was easier. And the guide said, get in here, and we hid under a bush. And the four of us held onto the trunk, and the helicopter came down. And with the blades, it moved everything. And we moved ourselves with the trunk. Shit, that was fucked up. We moved ourselves with the trunk, and nothing. The helicopter kept moving, and you could see all the bushes, and the grass, the way it moved, the way it opened up, with the force. Shit, there's nothing there, but they didn't see us. We're there under that tree, that had a bunch of branches, so you couldn't see. But since they had found us from the air, we heard the cops come on motorcycles, on foot, and in jeeps. And they looked for us, but they didn't see us. But I could see them—they were there, two meters from me. Damn, and they didn't see us. Fucking shit. And since you're scared, and you had to run, you can't even breathe deeply, right? You have to breathe softly. Softly, softly. And the guide asked me if I saw someone over here, I said yes, I had two cops behind me, and he asked me if I saw if there were any behind him, and I said no, behind you there's no one, but behind me there are two, so we have to wait.

So when we were there under that bush and they didn't find us, they came to look for us on foot and they didn't find us that way either. And right there they asked each other, where did they go, where did they go, we know we saw them around here—but they didn't find us. And the four of us were there, just two meters from them, and we could see them but they didn't see us.

So then the moment comes when it's starting to get dark out, and we see that the guys are going, we hear the motorcycle getting farther away, and they leave. And the guide says OK, now we can let go [of the bush], and we stayed there resting on the ground for a bit, and he says now we're going to move on. And we left that bush and started walking, and we hear the sound of the motorcycle again. And we say we're going to hide, and we hid under another bush, again, but this time it was only that we were on the side of the road, and they were passing along the road. So that was what we had heard. They were just passing by. As part of their routine, something like that. But they didn't see us. The guide says you know what, we're going to wait here until it's really nighttime. So night comes and we all go out and by then it was dark, dark, and the guide says we're going out and we're going to keep walking. But don't get lost, because we don't have flashlights or anything. Don't get lost, follow me.

We kept walking, walking, walking, and then the guide stops us, and far, far away we see the helicopter in the sky, shining its lights, and below we see the lights of the cars, in the bushes, and the guide says I think they're still looking for us, they're asking themselves where we are, what spot we are in. They're looking for us, saying, ""They were around here somewhere.""

And we arrive... A lot of people think the border is a place with a lot of security and all that. The border with Mexico is divided by some wooden posts and barbed wire, nothing more. We were walking together, the four of us, when *pla!* The four of us are thrown backwards and it's that we hadn't seen the barbed wire, shit! And the guide says, use a branch to lift the section of fence wire, and we go through. After we go through, we're walking, walking, walking, we start to see the first houses, we go through a neighborhood, and the guide says yes, we're in Douglas now. We hid ourselves there in a place where people dump the garbage, and he says wait here, please don't get up for anything, I'll come right back, and shit, like two hours later the guy comes back in a car, he says get in, we get in, and he takes us to a house, a family's house. So we get to this house, and there are two people in the house. One is a woman who is pregnant. And she says she had arrived in this house about two weeks earlier, but that they were treating her well there.

**MRR: And where was she from?**

S: She was Ecuadoran. And she said yes, in that house they had treated her well, but on the way there she had been robbed and she had nothing. So then the lady gives us food and everything, and two days later, the man who brought us across shows up and says OK now we're going to Phoenix, but you know what, I'm not going to be able to take you there, he says. You're going to go in a tourist van. This van goes to all the tourist sites in Douglas, and it goes to Phoenix. So we get in a van, and the guy in the van asks our names, we give them our tickets, the fare was six dollars, and we get in the van and start the trip. When we're leaving Douglas for Phoenix, on the highway, we see a lot of police there, and we start to get worried. And what had happened is that farther up the road there had been an accident, and they had closed the road. So because of that there was a traffic jam, and there were a lot of cops. And the guy says, you know what, I'm going to take a detour, we're going to take a little longer, but we're going to get to Phoenix without problems. So the guy goes into this little town, goes around the edge of Phoenix and then comes back into Phoenix, but from the other side of Phoenix.

We get to Phoenix, and the guy leaves us at his office. And at that office, we call a person who was going to pick us up there. And the lady says, wait for me there. She took like four hours to come and get us. Shit, the office was going to close. And the guy said what time are they coming to get you? Because I have to close up. But shit, she came to get us like at midnight.

But the lady comes to get us in a van, get in back, sit down and you can relax because you're in Phoenix now and nothing's going to happen, they took us to Phoenix to this lady's house, in a neighborhood that was kind of so-so, it was a big house but when we went inside it there were like 150 people. But still it was a bit more relaxed, a house with air conditioning, a house with a

kitchen and every day they cooked, if they didn't cook they ordered the three meals a day to be delivered. Shit, you had a shower, a washing machine. You know how the houses are here, they have everything, you can wash your clothes, everything. We were there for another week also.

**MRR: With that many people?**

S: Yes. And after about a week, they started to take us out eight at a time in a van. Sitting up properly, to Los Angeles. Then in Los Angeles, these guys leave you in a hotel. Supposedly it's a hotel with one room for two people, but you're going to enter that room and you're going to find like 15, 20 people. Since all the rooms in the hotel are carpeted, everyone was sleeping on the floor, in the beds... In the mornings it was a problem, you had to leave the room early because they come to clean it, and they can't see more than four or five people, maximum, and the rest had to go for a walk somewhere. So I ended up being in Los Angeles for like two weeks.

**MRR: What did you do for those two weeks?**

S: All those two weeks we were stuck in that hotel.

**MRR: Nothing else?**

S: Nothing else. Stuck in the hotel. Waiting for them to come and get you. And then a moment comes when they say now, now you're going. Shit, your flight for New York leaves at noon, shit, the guys come to look for you at like 11 in the morning, and to get from the hotel to the airport takes fucking forever. Fifteen of us left, but only 12 of us managed to get on the flight, and three stayed behind. Me and two women stayed behind. The next direct flight for New York left at night. And the next flight for New York but with a stopover left right then, in a half hour. So I took that flight. I went to Las Vegas. I was in Las Vegas for like five hours. Waiting for the next flight. And from there I took my flight for New York, like at 7:00 at night. And I got here to New York, to JFK, at 1:00 in the morning, on September 11.

**MRR: No, seriously?**

S: Yes, yes. True. Scared shitless. Fuck. And that's it.

**MRR: And who did you have here?**

S: I have two aunts here. I was living with one of them for a month. From there I went out, looked for my own apartment, my own stuff, and I've lived alone since then.

**MRR: And in the scene you didn't know anyone?**

S: I didn't know anyone here... really I found out that Eduardo from ANFO was here in the United States, and that Eduardo's cousin David (Huasipungo) was in New York, and the ex-vocalist of Los Formales, Rafo, was in San Francisco. And the ex-bassist of Aeropajitas was here. But I had no communication with them. So via email, I managed to contact people from Peru, and they also looked to contact me, and that's how I managed to contact those people here.

And so because of that I started to hang around more in the scene here in New York, and get to know more people, and meet up with more people I had known in Peru, who are here. Like with Renzo, from La Cuna de Tu Hijo, and Cristian, from Vitarte, who lives in New Jersey, and Huasipungo who I already had some idea about from Peru. And through them I met more people, and more people. And got to know more bands, and all that.

**MRR: Now you go to shows more often.**

S: I go more often, and I meet more people, get to know more places where there are shows...

**MRR: How much debt did you end up with for that whole trip?**

S: Nothing, because if you remember, I said that the factory where I worked had closed. And they gave me some compensation, and with that compensation, I did the whole trip. But I want to make clear that I did this trip for adventure, right? There are people who do it out of necessity. But if you're going to do it for necessity, I want to tell you that it's not a game. There are people who out of desperation come without any preparation, and on the way they rob you, they fuck with you, there are even people who never make it here and no one knows what happened to them. Because you come with another name, you come with people you don't know, you don't know if the person traveling with you is crazy, psychotic, or if the people who are receiving you in that country are crazy. If you come for adventure, without preparation, you have to think twice about it. If I had a second opportunity, I wouldn't do it.

**MRR: No?**

S: No, not anymore, no.

**MRR: And life here?**

S: Life here is much better than life there, because your money has more purchasing power. In Peru, despite the fact that you work more than 48 hours a week, your pay doesn't cover your expenses at all. While here, you can work 40 hours a week, you can work three days a week, cover your 40 hours, and you have enough to live on. And you can work three days and have four days off. Or you can work four days and have three days off. And you have enough to live on. Not there, there you have to work every day, your pay isn't enough to cover anything, and on top of that you have problems with regular people. In the early days, in the '80s, the underground people faced a lot of problems because of the way they dressed, their way of saying things and interpreting things. There were a lot of problems with that.

**MRR: What do you mean?**

S: I mean, like the cops were a bit confused, they thought you were a terrorist because you dressed in black, or because they saw you wearing an army jacket, or because your lyrics were strong, I mean they interpreted everything as being connected to subversion. And in fact it was subversion, but it was a different kind of

subversion. It wasn't the political subversion that at that time some people wanted to impose in Peru...

**MRR: We're talking about Sendero [Shining Path]....**
S: We're talking about Sendero, and the MRTA... which also brought a lot of problems to the left movement because they infiltrated the movement and managed to attract the attention of certain people, and now those people are serving prison sentences, or in the worst of cases they have died in combat.

**MRR: And how do you see the scene here compared to the scene there?**
S: It's colder, right? That is, in Peru, and until now I've never been able to explain this, in Peru, the scene is weaker but if you want to meet up with someone...to start, this comes from the beginning. The first underground scene, all the people started to meet on the steps of the Villarreal University. At the first place you could get pirated and underground music in Peru, which was called Nave de los Profugos (Ship of the Fugitives). So people got together there. Members of bands, and people who weren't members of bands, got together there to talk, or to learn about the new releases that were out, or new fanzines, or new shows that were happening. And that has now spread a lot; now there are galleries, music stores in Peru. People who sell independent and pirated music still exist, there are places where you can find music—Casa de Quilca, Casa de Wilson, Galeria Brasil—there are places where stuff is sold, in Comas, in Higuereta. There are places where stuff is sold in the provinces, now people have more opportunities to find out what's happening there, through the internet, through email and all that, right?

Before it wasn't like that, you had to meet up with people from the bands in this place I mentioned, La Nave de Los Profugos. Now it's the same here; there for example, if I want to know something about a group, I could go to those places I talked about, right? But here, the only way I've seen people meet up to talk or to go somewhere is at the shows, right? Any other day, nothing. For example, if I want to see such-and-such a person, here I can't say that. There's no specific place where people meet up, whereas in Lima there is. There, if you want to see people, shit, it's for sure you're going to see that person, because you're going to see him in Galeria, or in such-and-such a place, something like that, right?

**MRR: Here there's more of a lack of unity also, right?**
S: Yes, that's true.

**MRR: But now there are more immigrants in the scene, right? Every day you see more.**
S: Yes, every day you see more, more Latinos. What Renzo from R-Tronika said to me, the first time he saw me at ABC No Rio, for a minute I thought I was in Quilca, he said, because I saw you, I saw Kristian from Vitarte, and shit, well the people from there, we got together in a place and we saw each other there, and now here we see each other again, something like that. It's paradoxical.

**MRR: And what about returning to Peru?**
S: Eventually that's my desire, but now, it all ended up with nothing since Congress hasn't approved a law—everything is just in a wait-and-see mode. Each side wants to give a point of view in their favor, but no one has given a point of view in favor of the immigrants. They want to charge too much, they want to charge an excessive quantity apart from what each immigrant pays every year in taxes, but apart from what each immigrant pays out of their weekly check, apart from those obligatory contributions that we make, they want to make you pay like a fine to be able to stay in this country.

**MRR: And the reception of the US scene? How is your English, by the way?**
S: I'm going to English school in the mornings, I'm trying to learn something. But even now I'm speaking and understanding a bit, especially because of work, because I need it to be able to communicate with them.

**MRR: What's your job?**
S: I work in a restaurant. I'm a waiter at a restaurant. We'll see how long that lasts. For the moment, that job, I'm not seeing much future in it. I'm thinking I'll learn a bit more English, go to school to learn something that I like, sound, photography, something that has more to do with this.

**MRR: Do you still have anything to do with the scene in Peru?**
S: I still have contact with the scene in Peru, with the people from Leucemia, Autonomia, Rezios, Dios Hastio, with Sindicato Subte, with all the people from the old scene and people from the current scene too.

**MRR: And are you thinking of doing something here, like a distro or a band?**
S: What I'm thinking of doing here is to bring music from there, and try to distribute it here, because what has most shocked me here is that the group from Peru that was best known here was Dios Hastio and after that...

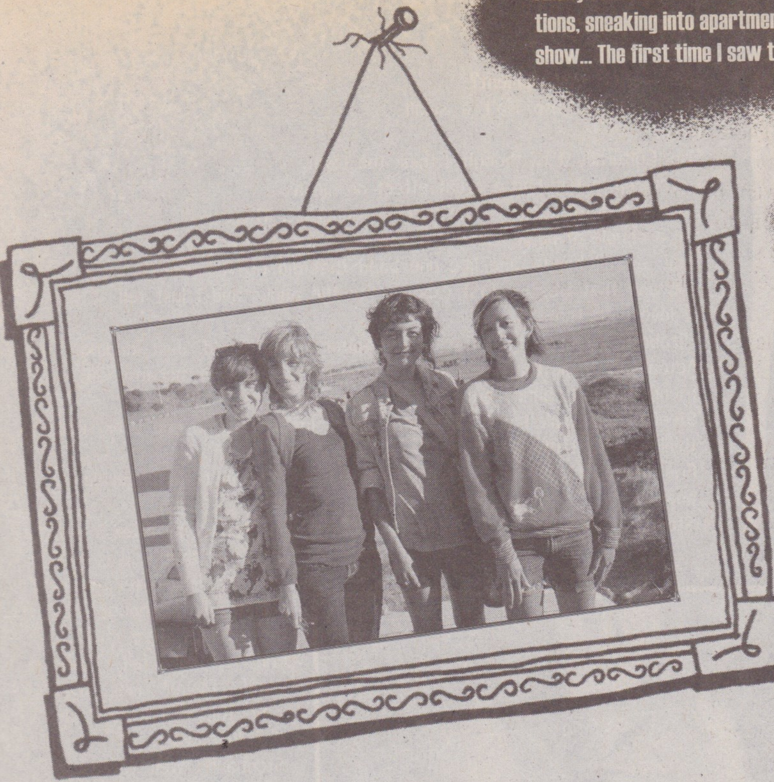
**MRR: And Autonomia too.**
S: And nothing else. There are groups there that have three or four CDs out and no one here knows about them. There's a great metal band that's really good, called Cranium, have you heard them?

**MRR: Yes, Cranium are great, and no one knows them here. Do you think the US scene would accept it?**
S: Well, I've realized that the US scene is fundamentally hardcore. That is, groups that don't do hardcore would only be accepted by people who know that group, but a hardcore group would be more accepted by other groups. The hardcore scene here is bigger and more accepted by other groups.

**MRR: Anything else?**
S: No... Well, I wanted to add something about when you were asking me about the time I was in the underground scene in Peru, to say that we formed a hardcore metal band with Daniel, David and Toño called Dogma SS. We managed to record a compilation with other bands called Entre Heroes y Cobardes (Between Heroes and Cowards), and we have two songs on that. But we also managed to record an entire album but it never came out, and we want it to come out so people can know more about that group.

**MRR: OK, I think that's it, right?**
S: Yes.

Finally Punk is from Austin, Texas. They sound like the collision of a million ideas, late night conversations, sneaking into apartment complex swimming pools, smashed bathrooms, 11-hour drives to the next show... The first time I saw them was at an eviction show in Oakland where kids were throwing fireworks out of windows, stage diving from broken amps and half the band were on acid I think... Although I am sure they get irritated with the constant references to European post-punk of the early '80s, they really do remind me of a brattier (is that even possible?!) Kleenex/Liliput. I have talked about them so much in my columns that Golnar asked if I was on their payroll—I'm not I swear! Their music is smart and dumb at once, they are amazing live, really like watching indoor fireworks, they are dismissive and funny and totally refreshing. They switch instruments after each song, sing about teenage boys and penguins and peyote, and apparently they aren't punk because they aren't The Casualties. Gene Defcon interviewed the band just before they went on tour with the also great New Bloods. Introduction written by Layla Gibbon.



# Finally Punk

**MRR: If any of these questions suck let me know...because we have 44 to go!**
All: Oh my god...

**MRR: Why are you in a band?**
Erin: It's a lot of fun...
Elizabeth: I like touring, and having this network of people that you can go and meet in every single town.
Erin: I'm more into the creative side of it; I like fiddling around on the guitar and writing stuff. It's a positive and constructive way to spend your time—like, oh, you could watch TV but I have this guitar my parents bought me... And then it's fun going to shows and not having to pay because you are playing.
Stephanie: Also when you're at a show and people ask you what band you are there for and you're like: actually I'm playing the show...

**MRR: What kind of band did you imagine yourself being in before you were ever in a band?**
Veronica: In my early years at school, I played violin and sang in honor choirs. I had reveries here and there of one day being on one of those *Christmas Hits* CDs they play at Hobby Lobby and other crafts stores with the cheesy choirs. I was truly obsessed with Norman Rockwell's *Christmas Homecoming*. I'd record my little sister and me in the middle of the night on a tape deck while we sang hits such as "Ave Maria" and "What Child Is This?"
Erin: I never thought I would be in a band, ever.
Stephanie: I thought I would be in a band!
Elizabeth: You were already in a band when you were 15

Stephanie: In middle school, we had these talent shows and things and I always dreamed I would come with a guitar and a smoke machine and I would play like...
Elizabeth: You would play "Stairway to Heaven."
Stephanie: No! I was super into "alternative rock"—that was underground in El Paso, no one knew about it in 1998, I was like "This is going to blow them away!" I didn't know how to play guitar, but I still had that vision. But then when I got to high school I got a little mariachi guitar and I started to play. I moved so I didn't have any friends, so I started playing music and I started a band in high school. It was a pop punk band. But you couldn't really tell.

**MRR: Did you get a mariachi guitar because you were from El Paso?**
Stephanie: It's probably related to that.
Elizabeth: Those are the cheapest guitars you can buy.
Erin: My first guitar and the only guitar I have is a classical guitar.
Elizabeth: It's related to what was available.
Erin: Yeah, it was only a hundred dollars or something.

**MRR: What towns are you from? I feel stupid asking questions I already know the answers to.**
Erin: I'm from Victoria, TX.
Elizabeth: I'm from Austin, TX.
Stephanie I'm from El Paso.

**MRR: Do you think these small towns have anything to do with your musical development?**
Stephanie: El Paso isn't a small town.
Erin: Culturally it is, though. I think the town I grew up in has had a great effect on me as a person, and the music scene there in general... There are a couple of punk bands there that are just like trashy rock 'n' roll bands, and like one band that did GG Allin covers, and that was my first exposure to the punks and I just fell in love with that.
Elizabeth: Well, Austin's the music capital of the world. Just kidding. Actually, I think that had no effect on me whatsoever because all my friends were in bands but I wasn't really.
Stephanie: I think I was super repressed. In El Paso no one ever really thinks about stuff like that.
Erin: Well, Victoria's kind of a nowhere town. You just work and you're poor.
Stephanie: El Paso is super primitive, we got Hot Topic way after it was cool...not that it was ever cool! It's like ten years behind so I thought all these bands were cool...
Erin: I think all Texas small towns are that way—they're locked in this time warp.
Stephanie: Well you were able to find the cool bands...
Erin: Thanks to the internet!

**MRR: Were you guys friends before the band?**
All: NO!
Erin: I was not really with Elizabeth.
Stephanie: I was friends with Veronica
Erin: I was friends with Veronica, I kind of knew Stephanie.
Stephanie: Well, because of The Carrots.
Erin: But we never really hung out back then.
Veronica: Erin, Stephanie, and I were all in The Carrots prior to Finally Punk. We met Elizabeth through friends of friends.

**MRR: Do you think it's strange then that your best friends are pretty much these strangers that you met through this totally random thing?**
Stephanie: Well, we were forced to spend a lot of time together.
Elizabeth: The way that you make friends with anyone is kind of random though.
Erin: I can honestly say that I love all of them.
*(They all coo and shriek and someone says "insert hug")*

**MRR: Do you think that this band is the greatest you will ever be in or do you see yourself going on to even greater things?**
Erin: I don't even think about that.
Elizabeth: That seems like a pointless discussion.
Erin: I am just concerned about having fun. As long as it's fun I'll keep doing it.
Veronica: I take it for what it's worth—vague answer. OK, but I ha to say it's *one of* the greatest things I've done so far. I'm sure I'll do several projects in the future. Maybe one of those bands will end up on the cover of *The Cypress Texan*, if we're lucky.
Stephanie: I don't gauge it in greatness. I think you start taking it too seriously.
Erin: I have a lot of doubts sometimes!

**MRR: Are you ever frustrated by the reality of what the band is, compared to what you are attempting to achieve in your mind?**

Veronica: We're either taken too seriously or not seriously enough. That can be frustrating I guess. Otherwise, I don't worry to think about it much. We're being creative and expressing it in so many different ways, whatever way we want, and just being sincere about what we do. That's all that matters to me personally.

Elizabeth: Every time we write a new song we have that problem, but then we get it together and work it out.

Erin: What do you mean?

**MRR: Do you have these grand plans and then find it's hard to make it become reality?**

Stephanie: I think it started out being "it is what it is" and now we do think about it more.

Elizabeth: I think people will put it in a certain direction more than we have. Like 'Oh, you're like all these bands!" When we're like, "I don't even know who those bands are."

**MRR: So do you find yourself trying to go in that direction, trying to be the bands people think you should be?**

Elizabeth: Maybe we're more aware of it...

Erin: Obviously we are more influenced now by those bands if we are just learning about them now, but like the sounds are in our head, what comes out comes out. Some of it is pretty premeditated, I guess.

Stephanie: Yeah, I don't know how to answer that question.

**MRR Are you ever embarrassed by the actions or statements of a band mate while on stage.**

Elizabeth: Yes.

Stephanie: Yes, as well as socially...

*(They all start screaming and laughing and I have no idea what anyone is saying)*

Erin: It was like our second show and we got up to play in the back of this vintage store.

Stephanie: It was like a pizza store slash vintage store. We got up to play and of course there were like three people watching us and Elizabeth goes "People tell us we sound like the Raincoats so don't tell us that because we're tired of hearing about that." And we were like did she just say that? Is she joking? But she was totally serious.

**MRR It probably has to do with Elizabeth growing up in Austin the musical capital of the world and having all these...**

Elizabeth: No, I think it's actually because I hate when people say we sound like The Raincoats.

**MRR I guess I'll scratch out question 9 about the Raincoats then. Are there any lyrical themes that keep appearing in the band's music so far?**

Stephanie: You always write about boyfriends.

Elizabeth: I always write about boys... Erin writes about drugs.

Erin: DRUGS!?! I wrote one song about drugs and it was a dumb joke!

Veronica: Elizabeth is very into the male species, adolescents per se; Stephanie emits youth; Erin is all angst and love; and I'm into the environment and skate punks from the '80s.

**MRR Name some of the topics that your songs are about.**

Elizabeth: Johnny Depp, Penguins, Australia.

Erin: With "Peyote" I had just read that Tom Wolfe book *The Electric Kool Aid Acid Test* and I was thinking about drugs and colorful scenes I guess.

Stephanie: A couple of songs about crazy people like "Redneck Gout Club."

Erin The lyrics came when I was waiting for the bus and some woman was acting crazy.

**MRR: If you could snap your fingers and relocate the band anywhere, where would it be?**

Veronica: Relocate the band to Germany, subsequently shave our heads to perfection, revamp into *Finally Deutschpunk*, and solely write anarchical songs like "Ein Zwei Polizei" or songs about the cold war. Only Elizabeth or Erin can front the band for obvious reasons.

Elizabeth: Uh, New York?

Erin: Japan? I don't know.

Stephanie: Well, maybe California? We should move onto a boat and sail around and do a boat tour.

Erin: We should become pirates and plunder cities.

**MRR What does the name Finally Punk mean to you?**

Veronica: *FINALLY! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...*

Erin: I don't know Gene, you came up with it.

Elizabeth: Yeah, why doesn't Gene Defcon explain it?

**MRR: One of you guys said Finally Punk and I said that's a really good band name.**

Stephanie: No, I remember this very clearly, we were in the Skadden's living room and we were talking about music and how our sound is, we were trying to describe it because our sound was like really weird in the early stages, then you were describing what our albums could be. Oh we're disco! Oh we're grunge! We're all in disco outfits, and then we're suddenly grungey and then we reach to the side and we're finally punk. And you said that. And I said, "Finally punk, that's a funny phrase," and then we started talking about that, and it become our band name.

Elizabeth: I think that it's kind of a joke because we're not really punk.

Stephanie: If you put punk in your name then people think you must be a really intense band.

Erin: If you think about it that way it is kind of a joke, but nobody

is ever like... We're Finally Emo! We're Finally Grunge!
Elizabeth: Like, we're the most metal band ever! Grunge City.

**MRR: Why don't you guys think of yourselves as punk?**
Elizabeth: We don't see ourselves as anything I guess.
Stephanie: Just not to be classified, I mean, I guess we're punk in that we're DIY. I feel like if you look at punk rock, what it's become, it's not what we are, but then if you look at it in terms of the late '70s...
Erin: I think we're in that tradition.
Elizabeth: Because not everyone thinks of punk as what it was in the late '70s you know, I think people expect to see like a hardcore band, which is what punk is considered now.
Erin: No, we're not the fucking Casualties, we don't have mohawks, we don't wear chains. Sorry *Maximum Rocknroll!*

**MRR How do you feel about the weird guys that are in the front row of Finally Punk Shows**
Elizabeth: I think they buy the most merch. We had to get XL shirts for all the really big guys that like us.
Erin: There's always like three really drunk guys that are fat and weird, who think we're a joke, and then they take pictures of us. They just think we're cute. They're missing the point.
Elizabeth: I know what you mean, there's always like "those guys" at our shows. Most shows are full of guys anyway. Most men our age just deal with us as like people, not as like "sexy girls!!" whereas those guys see us as "sexy girls who play instruments! Cute!" Which is weird because we're not used to being treated that way.

**MRR: Do you not want to be seen as sexy?**
Elizabeth: I don't care.
Stephanie: I don't think people see us as sexy.

**MRR-I'm not saying do you think people think you are sexy, more like—do you *not* want to be seen as sexy?**
Elizabeth: I don't care, I think we're very hot.
Erin: I'd bang each and every one of us!
Elizabeth: It's really hard for me to decide which one is cuter—Veronica, Erin or Stephanie or myself. I look in the mirror all day long trying to figure it out, then I look at a picture of each of them next to me.

**MRR: How come more girls in Austin haven't started bands to play with Finally Punk yet? Like your friends?**
Veronica: The only other all-girl band that I know of that's making music in Austin is Follow That Bird. I wish there were more girl punk bands. I feel like these days the music scene in Austin is totally different. People seem jaded and succumb solely to indie-pop music and drum circles or something. That's the "happening" thing I feel like—it's fucked up.
Erin: I know of some girls who have come up to me and said, "Man, I'm really insecure abut playing an instrument and I could never be in a band" and I don't understand why they have those thoughts. Why don't you just do it? They're just intimidated. The scene is so male-dominated. It's really sad; they shouldn't have that attitude.
Elizabeth: I was friends with all these guys in bands and none of them ever asked me to do a band with them. Then these girls showed up and were like come do this band with us. That was really weird for me, after eight years of knowing guys in bands and no one ever asked me to play music with them. I think maybe guys are not going to ask you to be in a band with them if you're a girl. Only other girls will take the initiative.
Stephanie. I don't know, I think that a lot of guys will only play music with you if it's *that* type of music, where they think they like need a girl.
Erin: The majority of Austin wouldn't even think about asking a girl to play music with them.

**MRR: Who are the main motivating personalities in the band?**
Erin: Elizabeth. She's like Captain Mom. She orders everybody around. But she's a good influence on the rest of us.
Stephanie: You definitely need someone like that.

**MRR How does that make you feel?**
Elizabeth: It's stressful sometimes. But the thing is they're all down for it, it's not like I say something and they're all like "whatever!" When we went to New York, we figured out a way to do it financially and Stephanie flew out Friday and flew back in time for a class on Monday, you know. It's not like I have to do everything; Stephanie and Veronica booked the tour. They do the design stuff. I just have to organize it and then they'll do it.

**MRR Speaking of tour, have y'all got a van?**
Elizabeth: We're just gonna take my car! Captain Mom. I put a hitch on my car today so we can take a trailer.
Erin: The mom wagon.

**MRR What is the most valuable trait that each band member brings to the band?**
Veronica: Eli is the motherly and pragmatic one; Steph is bright and honest; and Erin is the ultimate chill master.
Elizabeth: I think about this a lot. Erin's like the creative talent, she's always saying I wrote this new bass part or whatever. Veronica's really good at networking, knowing people. Stephanie's really good at guitar and also she does all the design stuff. And I'm the planner. We already talked about that. And then all of us are pretty so that helps!

**MRR: Name something wonderful and terrible about Austin.**
Elizabeth: I was born here so I feel like every single era of my life has been totally different. If I'd left after high school I would have a totally different view of Austin, if I left after college I would have had a totally different view of it now. When you've never really lived anywhere else... You always used to tell me I didn't have an idea of how the world really works because I grew up here—I would be like "People aren't that conservative" and Gene would be like, "Whatever, you grew up in Austin, you don't know how conservative people are," so as a result I think people are way better than they really are.
Erin: There are like three liberal people in Victoria. The worst thing for me is all the asshole college kids that dominate everything. I live in Fratsville, USA and it's the worst—there are condos being built everywhere I live and it's really disgusting. They're tearing down all these

beautiful historical buildings and building dumps.
Stephanie: I hate all the frat people, especially after going to college with them in all of my classes.
Elizabeth: When I was 18, I was like who *are* these people, because I had never seen them before.
Erin: The people from small towns!
Elizabeth: Have these people been living in my town for however long and I didn't even know it?

**MRR: What is your favorite Finally Punk song to play?**
Veronica: Any song I don't do lead vocals or play guitar on.
Stephanie: I like playing "Negative Creep."
Elizabeth: I like playing "No Age."

**MRR: That segues into the next question: What is the strongest Finally Punk line-up? Who is most comfortable on each instrument?**
Veronica: This has been suggested on more than one occasion and I strongly agree: Erin on bass, Stephanie the guitar master, Eli the sass machine on vox, and me on drums.
Erin: Marcus from Silver Daggers was telling us his dream line-up; I think he was saying Veronica on drums, you on vocals you on bass and me on guitar.
Stephanie: We don't have a song like that though.
Erin: We haven't done it so maybe we should try it.

**MRR: I'm asking for your opinion though.**
Erin: Yeah, but each different formation produces a different sound.
Elizabeth: I really like the fact that it's always different because then our songs sound different. I feel like when Stephanie drums, her drumming style is really distinctive, it's really punk and she uses a lot of cymbals. Veronica's drumming style uses a lot of toms. The fact that Stephanie and Veronica and me and Erin all drum on different songs makes all the drum parts different instead of just being just one person's style all the time.

**MRR: Discuss The Tigers and Dumb Haircuts.**
Veronica: The Tigers were a true nihilistic-punk band that was formed in October of 2004 out of sheer eagerness. I was excited about bands that were happening at the time like Happy Birthday/Video Screams and The Sneeze(s). We played our first show in February 2005 with Dumb Haircuts, drunk as skunks, constantly stripped down to our underwear, and were known to talk shit to the crowd here and again because we were snotty, and thought we were better than everyone. Well, *that was short lived*...we played about ten shows or maybe less? We were into the Germs at the time; we covered few of their stuff, alongside the Doors and LA Drugs. I decided I hated singing in the band. Near the demise of The Tigers, I fooled with bass, and Aaron, our guitar player hated that so much. Stephanie was in the band for one hour I think, on drums, and Aaron hated that too! We were totally reckless—I walked away with some battle scars and half a fake tooth.
Elizabeth: I never saw the Tigers.
Erin: I went to their very first show.
Stephanie: Dumb Haircuts played with them once. We got them on this show because it was Jeremy's birthday.
Erin: That was their very first show because I took Jeremy lots of books that I stole from work for his birthday and I remember that I bought Veronica something too, it was like a valentine or something. Her and Jeremy were both in their underwear and that was pretty much their whole band. Aaron was drunk and was just thrashing away on the guitar, and it was really loud and screamy. Veronica's vocal style is totally different now; she used to be really really high-pitched. She sounded like a little girl, but it was cute. I was really into them because they covered the Germs. I was like "Fuck yeah."
*(They all start singing 'Rip them down, pull me up, tell them at I'm your gun, pull my trigger, I'm bigger than...")*

**MRR: I just want people to know about your previous bands...**
Stephanie: Dumb Haircuts were me and Dustin and Roy Tatum. I didn't even know what kind of music it was—weirdly twee, kind of poppy, pop punk kind of? I played bass. It was fun...
Elizabeth: That's how I knew Stephanie I guess, before I knew Erin or Veronica, through the Dumb Haircuts.

**MRR: What do people misunderstand most about Finally Punk?**
Elizabeth: That we're not as serious as people think we are?
Erin: People think we're a joke!
Elizabeth: Well, people think that "Missile" is an anti-war song.
Erin: I guess we are a joke in one sense.
Elizabeth: I think that people take our lyrics seriously but don't take us seriously as a band. When people see us, I think they're like "Oh that's adorable!" But then people who write about us take us really seriously; people who are very into music are very into us.
Erin: People over-analyze it.
Elizabeth: And then everybody else is just "Ha ha, whatever!"

**MRR: What's been the most fun moment of the band so far?**
Stephanie: When we played the Bowery Ballroom—that was cool.
Erin: Anytime we've traveled has been a lot of fun. I have this memory of when we were in Ohio and we played the worst show ever, and they refused to pay us, and we ultimately destroyed their bathroom. Toilet-papered everything, wrote on the walls and the mirrors. We trash bathrooms.
Veronica: There's two good times worth mentioning: Playing an eviction show in Oakland last summer while tripping on psychedelic shrooms with Erin, and collectively skinny-dipping in the Redwood Forest on a whim.

**MRR: What thing is most likely to break the band up?**
Elizabeth: Location.
Stephanie: I think it'd be more someone moving on, not so much in terms of location, but more with their life in general, wanting something different.
Elizabeth: If The Carrots become famous.
Erin: Too busy...

**MRR: Why do you say location?**
Elizabeth: Because me and Stephanie... We don't wanna talk about that.

**MRR: Why not?**
Stephanie: Because people will think we're breaking up but that's not the case.
Elizabeth: Me and Steph are taking a trip.
Erin: They're going on a Carnival Cruise around the world.
Stephanie: Why'd you even bring it up?
Elizabeth: I didn't bring it up, you brought it up.
Erin: Off the record!

**MRR: Ooookay...**
Stephanie: Why don't we rewind it, it's obviously really awkward.

**MRR: No don't rewind it, why are you being so weird? Who is the wildest child in the band?**
Veronica: Last summer Elizabeth was the last

person I'd think to call "wild" in any way shape or form, but this last tour, *Mad Dog Skadden* was unleashed with a vengeance and has claimed the title.

Erin: Veronica, because when she gets drunk...

Elizabeth: She's Indian so when she gets drunk...

Erin: She likes to fight, she's really dramatic, but I'm not saying that in a bad way.

Stephanie: It's just the facts!

**MRR: describe the Finally Punk aesthetic in three words or less**

Veronica: Uhhhm...liberated, weird, unabashed.

Stephanie: Different from each other. Oh wait, different from others.

Erin: What do you mean? Like at shows?

**MRR: I just mean the whole aesthetic, y'all have a design aesthetic.**

Erin: Young and colorful? It's fresh, it's hot, it's coool.

Elizabeth: Even though I'm really old?

Stephanie: Just kids having fun.

Elizabeth: We're teenagers. Kids having fun.

**MRR: What is the best age for a boy to lose his virginity?**

Elizabeth: As soon as possible, especially if I'm around. I'm kidding!

Stephanie: Whenever he's ready.

Elizabeth: If he feels loved and respected.

Erin: Yeah, when he's ready to become a responsible adult. Like 40 or 45.

Elizabeth: Do they ever!?

Erin: Once they become tamed by a woman.

**MRR: What about for a girl?**

Stephanie: Appropriate age?

Elizabeth: Whenever she's ready.

Erin: Whenever the flower is in bloom. *(lots of grossed out sounds in background)*

Erin: That was very poetic, it was beautiful.

**MRR: Did you have any experience playing instruments before the band?**

Veronica: Violin.

Elizabeth: I played flute in a marching band for six years.

Stephanie: I played French horn.

Erin: I played flute in sixth grade, and I also took a guitar class in high school but I didn't learn anything.

Stephanie: I took guitar for a year too but I hated it.

Elizabeth: I played piano for a year but I would get mad and kick the piano.

**MRR: A lot of flutes in this band. What made you think you could do it then?**

Stephanie: I've never thought I could not do something.

Erin: Yeah, it's a lot of fun just figuring out things.

**MRR; But y'all have been talking earlier about how girls think they can't do it...**

Stephanie: But we're not like that.

Erin: I guess we had access to instruments and I didn't really think twice about it—I was just like "Yeah that sounds fun."

Elizabeth: Also, I didn't have any female friends that I knew that were in bands before I started this, because that would have made me think about it earlier. Like, oh girls starting bands! Now that we're in a band our female friends are thinking about learning guitar and stuff.

**MRR: Did you consider yourselves musicians before, then?**

Erin: We weren't really creative with it though; we were just doing what we were told.

**MRR: Do you feel like a musician now, making sounds the best way you know how?**

Erin: "Making sounds the best way we know how!!?"

Elizabeth: I don't think I'm a musician but I think I know more about how to be in a band. This sounds really nerdy, but if I hadn't been in marching band I wouldn't really understand how to play with other people and how it's supposed to sound like when you're together. I would have had to learn all of that, and that seems impossible. I think what I'm doing now would be really hard if I hadn't been in marching band.

Erin: I don't really use anything I learned in the past to apply to what I do now.

Elizabeth: She's all new, like the phoenix rising from the ashes.

**MRR: That's all of my prepared questions.**

Erin: Freeform it 'til the end of the tape.

**MRR: OK! How many Finally Punk songs are there?**

Stephanie: 20 or something.

Erin: We have a lot, but we've also killed a lot of them.

Elizabeth: We've only killed like four. "Fuzz Bucket," "5 Year Old Angst," "Circus." and "Short People."

Erin: We actually killed "5 Year Old Angst"? We tried to bring it back but we couldn't play it. That one's amazing.

Stephanie: It's in nebula, it's in pergutory.

**MRR: Do you guys have anything coming out in the near future?**

Elizabeth: We just made a cassette tape that's going to be amazing, Josh from Deerhunter is gonna put out a 7" on his label. It's being pressed right now. In the future we're planning to go on tour with Clorox Girls. We played with them.

Erin: That would be amazing. But they were also drunk and we were drunk.

Elizabeth: I feel like that could happen. I'm gonna make it happen.

**MRR: You guys have another EP; do you have plans to put out a full-length?**

Erin: It's a 7" but it's a full-length record.

Stephanie: Our songs are so short that we have twelve on a 7" so it's basically a full-length.

**MRR: Do you guys have plans to release anything more than 7"s?**

Stephanie: Combining both 7"s into one!

Erin: No, I think just having 7" albums is pretty cool.

Elizabeth: People have talked about putting out a CD of all our stuff, but...

Erin: I am not interested in putting out CDs.

Stephanie: CDs are OK! Not everyone has analog!

Erin: I'm cool with having both!

Stephanie: I like that we have a tape now—something on every format.

Elizabeth: We should make an eight-track next, and a laser disc.

Erin: So nobody would listen to us.

Stephanie: We would just spend a lot of money and then burn everything.

Elizabeth: Just burn money.

Erin: That's our ultimate goal, just to burn money.

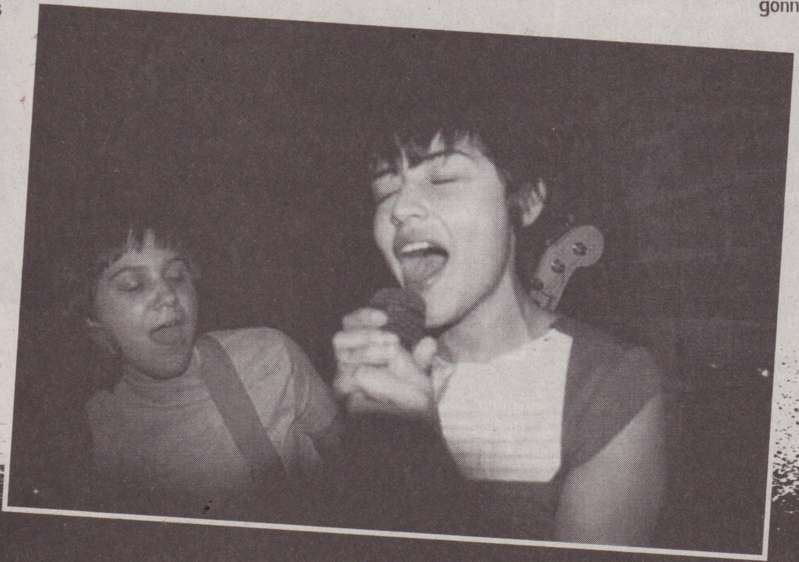
Stephanie: Make a bonfire out of our personal effects.

**MRR: Do you guys worry about touring financially, considering gas prices and everything?**

Elizabeth: I was really worried that we were gonna go in a van, but now we're going in my car which gets amazing gas mileage.

Erin: I'm worried that we're all gonna hate each other because it's gonna be so cramped.

Elizabeth: Especially when we have to drive eleven hours straight. And we're gonna put everything in a trailer and someone could just steal the trailer. Don't get any ideas.



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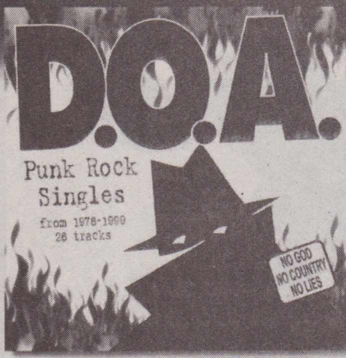


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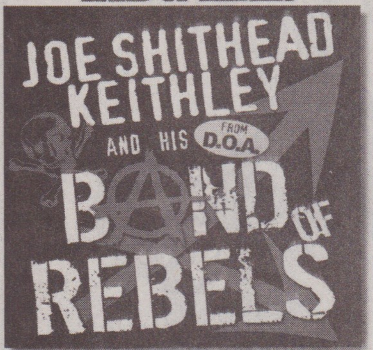


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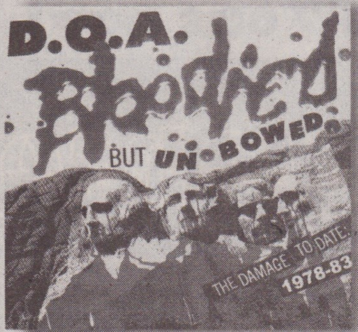


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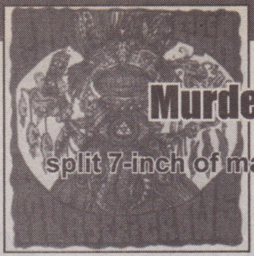

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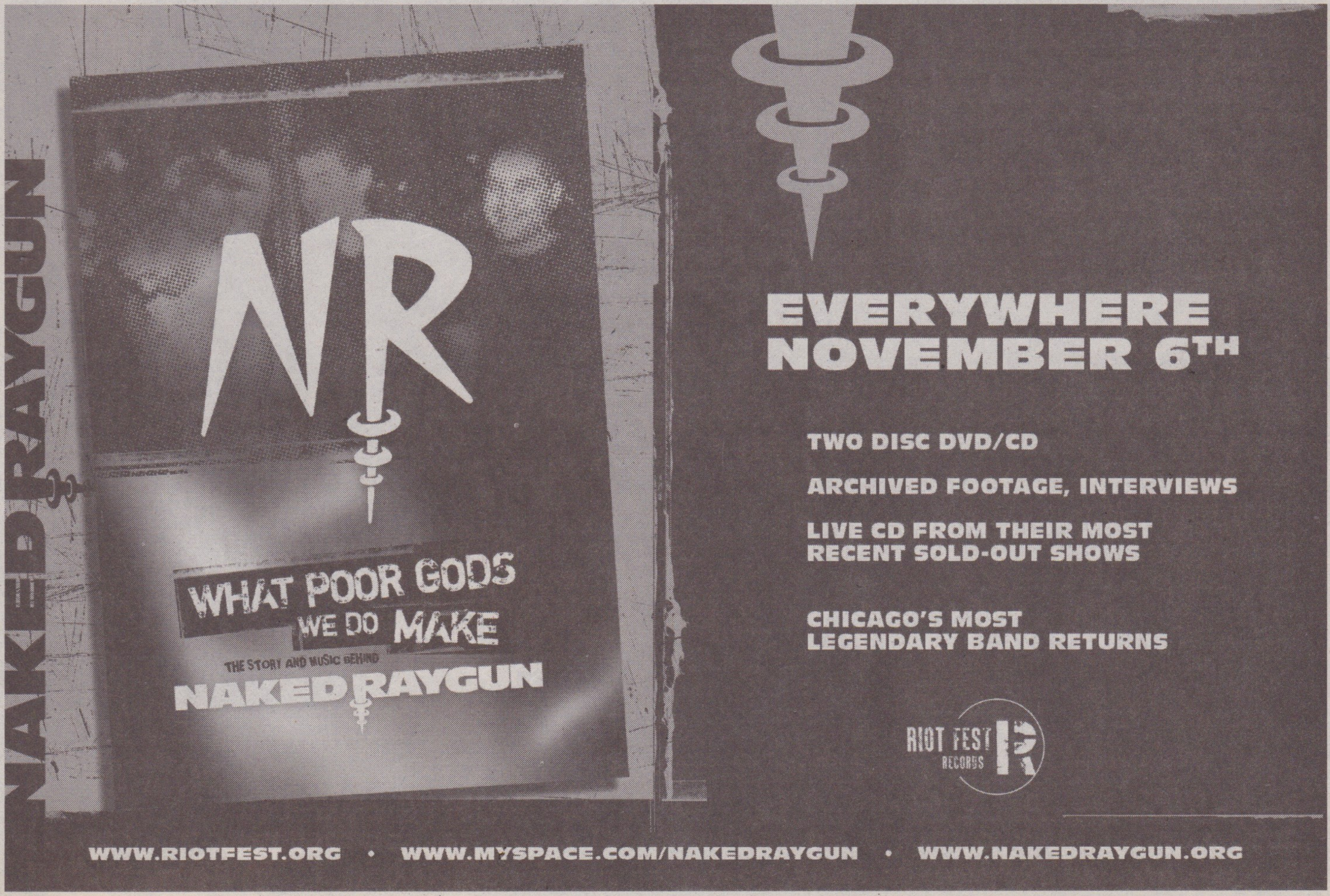
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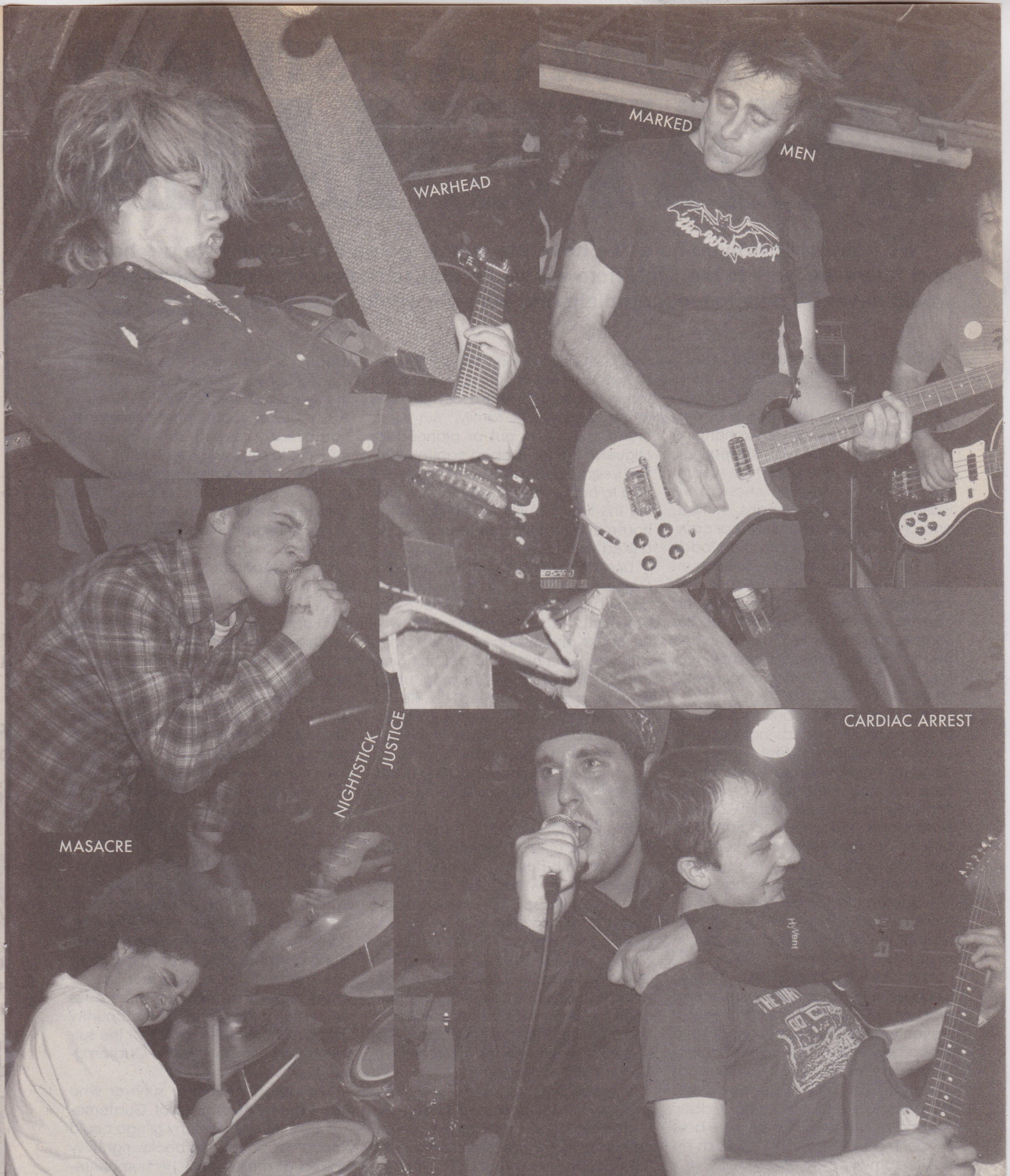
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# LA LUCHA PARA LA JUSTICIA EN GUATEMALA

the struggle for justice in

**"We have always lived here: we have the right to go on living where we are happy and where we want to die. Only here will we be able to better ourselves, elsewhere we would never be able to feel complete and our pain would be eternal." —** Popol Vuh[1]

### SAMAEL AND THE PROMISED LAND

Sitting across from Samael,[2] I could tell the man felt as hot and uncomfortable as myself. We had met only a handful of times, never exchanging much more than the typical greetings. Sporadic comments about the weather interrupted awkward silences as we waited for our rice, beans, tortillas, and chili peppers at an outdoor *comedor* in Rabinal, Guatemala. Today was Sunday—market day—when hundreds of people come from surrounding villages miles away to buy, sell, and trade goods needed for the week. But Samael did not come to the *pueblo* to buy fertilizer for the *milpa* (cornfield) or food for his family. He came to meet a gringo he barely knew.

The proud and confident leader of his small village was not his usual charismatic self. His feet were tapping. His hands rubbed together. His face seemed weathered and tired. Samael's usual appearance of self-confidence had been replaced with one of apprehension. It looked as if he hadn't slept in days. You see, like one in ten Guatemalans, Samael's son left Guatemala for the fabled North-the Promised Land. However, Samael hadn't heard word from Miguel in three weeks.

In my few encounters with Miguel, I learned a lot about him. Miguel had dropped out of school at the age of eleven in order to earn an income to support his family. Due to the lack of land in his village, Miguel knew that his future likely would be elsewhere. He commuted to the pueblo daily, working as a thankless shoeshine boy. Miguel made 25 cents to shine, as he put it, "some rich *ladino's* shoes."

Miguel found out that there really wasn't upward mobility in the world of shining shoes for a young indigenous man. So at the age of 14, Miguel and a friend traveled to Guatemala City to find permanent work. Miguel figured, "It was one less mouth to feed and I thought I could do more good sending money back to the family." But things didn't quite work out as planned for Miguel in the fast-paced capital. After two years of living in *Guate*, Miguel still had to *buscar chance* everyday. During this time he was kicked out of the house of a family friend for not having a fixed income.

Like many youth in Guatemala, Miguel had no place to go. Miguel became a street survivor out of necessity, not want. He found money any way he could and escaped his hardships with whatever he could get his hands on. Peddling, pushing, stealing, using, and begging consumed his life for over two years until, one day, he decided to head back home. As Miguel told me, "I couldn't stand anymore." He still attributes his reoccurring headaches and mental lapses to his life in *Guate*.

Miguel returned home beat up and sick. It was difficult for Miguel's pride to return with nothing to show, but in Miguel's own words, "It could have been a lot worse." His family had not heard from Miguel in two years and gladly took him in. During this time, Miguel helped Samael in the *milpa* and his mother, Maria, in the house. However, Miguel was in the same situation as when he had left some four years earlier. The family decided that Miguel's best chances for a decent life were not in Guatemala.

Samael took half of his family's life savings of 2,500 quetzales ($325) and borrowed 25,000 more from a well-off neighbor. As Samael put it, "Waiting a few months for a bank loan with high interest didn't interest me." However, he owed his neighbor around $3,250, needed to pay the Mexican *coyote* for guidance across Mexico and the US-Mexican border. After a deep breath, Samael said aloud, searching for any reassurance, "Crossing the border should have been easy. A number of youth in the community had already crossed, so we used this network to send Miguel."

While Samael sat desperately awaiting word from his son, cellphone tightly clutched in his left hand, the questions about immigration and life in the United States began. I answered as best I could, emphasizing that there were others in his village that knew more than I. After all, I've lived a privileged life. I came to Guatemala with a $400 airplane ticket and a backpack full of mostly unneeded junk. I never had to cross a desert for days without food and water because I lacked the proper entrance papers. I never had to risk life and limb riding the dangerous border trains because I lacked the money to leave my own country. I never had to experience the discrimination and hardships that many immigrants face, nor a government that labeled me "illegal."

At one point in the question-and-answer session, I felt a pang of selfishness. Whether it was from a perspective of privilege, guilt, or both, it didn't matter. I didn't want to talk about the fabled North anymore. And I let Samael know this. I fired, "How does it feel that so many of your family and comrades emigrate to the North, to the country that is responsible for much of the suffering that has occurred in Guatemala?"

Samael, a genocide survivor who has experienced more of Guatemala's dark history than any gringo could through a couple of books, rightfully looked at me puzzled. His humble response didn't shock me...

> Do you think I don't know what your government has done to my people? You need to under-

stand that we are barely surviving today. Our government does not respond to our needs, the needs of the poor, the *campesino*, the indigenous Mayan. It acts against our interests. We have real needs today. What else are we to do?

Samael then returned the favor, asking me, "Why don't the people of the United States understand what we have gone through? Why don't they know that we continue to suffer? Why don't they know that my son goes to your country in order to survive, to live a better life?" I had no answer. I only could answer, "*saber*," or, "who knows."

Few Americans think about the immigrant sacrifice of crossing treacherous deserts, or of being harassed, raped, and shot at by border police. Few understand the difficulties of leaving families and loved ones behind for long periods of time, living in an often-hostile environment in the United States. Most Americans can't locate Guatemala on a map, much less inform others about the genocide that occurred there. How many Americans know that the material authors for the genocide continue to walk as free men, holding key positions of power? Most importantly, few Americans understand the relationship between the horrible violence of the past with the legacy of impunity and poverty in Guatemala today.

### *LA VIOLENCIA* IN GUATEMALA

When learning about *la violencia* in Guatemala, it's impossible to ignore the significant role played by the US, beginning with the CIA-orchestrated overthrow of the democratically-elected president, Jacobo Arbenz, in 1954. What angered the Eisenhower administration, the CIA, and the vast landowner, the United Fruit Company (UFC),[3] was the 1952 Agrarian Reform[4] passed and initiated by Arbenz. The left-leaning government had decided that 2 percent of the people controlling 70 percent of the arable land was an obstacle to economic development.[5]

For the agricultural *campesinos*, the Agrarian Reform was essential to elevate the quality of life since it erased the debt peonage and vacancy laws enforced by the state for the benefit of the rich, mostly foreign, landowners. These laws were nothing more than various forms of forced indigenous labor. The Reform stopped this exploitation because it began to give real rights to the workers and it began the process of a more just distribution of land. This threatened the rich importers and exporters who wanted cheap labor, cheap raw materials, and vast tracks of land in order to make huge profits and control the industry.

The Agrarian Reform met with strong reaction, especially when the Arbenz government appropriated uncultivated land owned by the UFC. The company had undervalued its property for years in order to avoid taxes. When the Arbenz government offered to pay the set rate based off the company's stated value of its land through its tax forms (the UFC wanted $16 million while Arbenz offered $525,000), the UFC cried to those with which it had strong connections-namely the CIA and the Eisenhower administration.[6]

With pressure from the UFC, the CIA and Eisenhower administration began a covert operation to overthrow Arbenz. Propaganda, terror, and psychological warfare were set up by the angry American parties.[7] The CIA trained a small mercenary army in Honduras and conducted bombing raids against strategic targets. The campaign of terror was meant to convince the army and the Guatemalan people that the Arbenz government was ultimately and inevitably headed towards failure.[8] Their plan succeeded when Arbenz stepped down.

The new handpicked military regime celebrated in style by bringing out a CIA-created "blacklist" of over 70,000 names. Torture, imprisonment, fines, exile, and even death met a great many names on the list.[9] The celebration continued further with the outlaw of all unions and *campesino* organizations. All expropriated land was nullified and returned back to the rich *latifundistas*. Often times violence was used to kick the poor *campesinos* off the expropriated land. This coincided with the military regime barring three-fourths the population from voting with the enforcement of literacy laws.

With "democracy restored," the United States government propped up brutal dictator after brutal dictator. Many of those responsible for the worst human rights violations in Guatemala were armed by and trained in the US; many in the infamous School of the Americas (SOA). Many of the D-2 and G-2 intelligence officials,[10] the architects of the worst human rights violations during *la violencia*, were trained in the SOA. In fact, during Guatemala's worst reign of terror from 1978 to 1986, when *la violencia* reached it peak, SOA graduates comprised four of eight military officials in the cabinet of the dictator Lucas Garcia, six of nine under the dictator Rios Montt, and five of ten under the dictator Mejia Victores.

All three of these former dictators are currently wanted on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The deceased Garcia and the proselytizing evangelical preacher, Rios Montt, are most infamous for designing the rural "scorched-earth" campaign that directed the army to burn hundreds of villages and murder tens of thousands of civilians in its path. Montt was also the architect of a pacification program, "Beans and Rifles." This program set up militarized hamlets called "poles of development," giving food to those who submitted to the life of a brutal police state. To those who resisted, it was more scorched earth. An estimated 132,000 innocents died under the scorched-earth campaigns of Rios Montt and Lucas Garcia from 1980 to 1983.[11]

According to the United Nations-sponsored *Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico*[12] (the Truth Commission), during the 36-year civil war, some 626 Mayan villages experienced massacres in Guatemala. "The massacres that

eliminated entire Mayan villages... are neither perfidious allegation nor fragments of the imagination, but an authentic chapter in Guatemalan history," concluded the Commission. Some 150,000 refugees fled to Mexico. Over 1,000,000 were internally displaced in the campaign of ethnic cleansing. Over 200,000 died or "disappeared." Countless men, women, and children were tortured and raped-common practices by the army's forces.

The Commission found that 93% of the violence was at the hands of the Guatemalan army and state, and 83% of the victims were indigenous Mayans. The Commission attributed 3% of the violence to the guerrillas, despite the fact that the Reagan administration told a Congressional committee in August of 1982 that guerrillas were the main culprit for the violence in Guatemala.[13] The state-sponsored violence in Guatemala, most importantly, was described by the UN-sponsored Truth Commission as nothing short of genocide-a genocide directed at the Mayan indigenous population in the Guatemalan highlands.

Throughout *la violencia*, the US government stood behind its military government since it was "fighting communist guerrillas." This was the Reagan administration's version of democracy, played through a violent game of dominoes during an era of frozen war politics. Reagan paid the Guatemalan military's services well by arming the state and by ignoring the great atrocities being committed. When Rios Montt took power after a March 1982 coup, it was largely welcomed by the Reagan administration and the American press. Montt welcomed their support by accelerating the scorched-earth policy directed at the indigenous Mayan civilian population.

In December of 1982, the same month the UN passed a resolution condemning the human rights situation in Guatemala, Reagan met with Montt and stated to reporters that Montt "had been given a bad rap."[14] Reagan further declared:

> I know that President Rios Montt is a man of great personal integrity and commitment. His country is confronting a brutal challenge from guerrillas armed and supported by others outside Guatemala. I have assured the President [Montt] that the United States is committed to support his efforts to restore democracy and to address the root causes of this violent insurgency. I know he wants to improve the quality of life for all Guatemalans and to promote social justice. My administration will do all it can to support his progressive efforts.[15]

That same day in Las Dos Erres, Peten soldiers gang-raped young girls and grabbed children by their feet and swung them into walls, smashing their heads. Pregnant women had their stomachs punched and ripped open.[16] The Guatemalan army massacre of over 160 people, including 67 children, was under orders from Rios Montt. The US Embassy sent a confidential memo to the Reagan administration of the massacre. It never responded. Neither did the US media.

Recently the tortures and abuses at Abu Gharib and Guantanamo Bay have made headlines in the United States, as have the ethnic cleansings and/or genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur. Despite the fact that the death toll in Guatemala exceeded that of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Argentina, and Chile *combined*, it barely registered on the media radar. The story of the international arrest warrants of the high commands of the ex-dictators in Guatemala facing charges of genocide and crimes against humanity has gone largely unreported, despite the important role US foreign policy played in the genocide.

### RÍO NEGRO NIGHTMARE[17]

I am currently in the municipality of Rabinal, which sits in the department of Baja Verapaz. The beautiful Sierra Chuacas mountain range covers much of the municipality, located in the central part of Guatemala, just north of Guatemala City. According to the Truth Commission,[18] the Guatemalan military and paramilitaries assassinated over 4,000 people in Rabinal from 1981 to 1983, around 20% of the population. Some 99.8% of the casualties were indigenous Mayan Achí.[19] According to ADIVIMA, a local war survivor's organization, there are more than 80 clandestine cemeteries in the municipality of Rabinal as a result of massacres by the army and army-controlled civil defense patrols (PACs).[20]

It is here, in Rabinal, that I am volunteering my time as an international human-rights accompanier and observer of "the peace." Of the communities I accompany in Rabinal, most experienced horrific massacres under the high commands of Garcia and Montt. These communities have given public testimonies in the national genocide cases. Although the violence of the past has subsided, Guatemala continues to be a dangerous place for those struggling for human rights and justice.[21] Due to this dangerous *coyuntura* (current socio-politico situation), it is my role to visit and accompany the brave men and women who have given their public testimonies in the national genocide cases. It is the hope that my presence will provide some measure of security to those accompanied, creating space to organize in defense of their rights. Accompaniers essentially work as the eyes and ears for this international solidarity movement, using our connections to educate others and to mobilize our support network to pressure the Guatemalan state.

One community I visit within Rabinal is Pacux, a town transplanted during la violencia. Most of the 150-plus families are originally from Rio Negro, an agricultural and fishing community settled along the banks of the Chixoy River in the municipality of Rabinal. The community of Rio Negro did not choose to live in Pacux. They were forced to relo-

cate due to the rural scorched earth campaigns of Garcia and Montt.

In the mid-1970s that the National Institute of Electricity (INDE) and the Guatemalan government planned the displacement of a number of communities to make way for the Chixoy hydroelectric dam (which in turn created a man-made reservoir). This mega-project was financed by the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank. INDE and the Guatemalan state decided Rio Negro would be the first community displaced by the floodwaters. The people were never a part of the decision-making process. INDE instead offered the residents compensation, dividing the community. Some organized against the dam since the region was a central part of their religious and cultural practices. Others were too scared due to the *coyuntura*.[22]

March 4, 1980 ended in a massacre of civilians and the lynching of a policeman working as a security agent for the dam. According to witnesses, the agent was lynched after he opened fire on a crowd of civilians, massacring seven residents. The Guatemalan army used this incident as a pretext to increase its presence and aggression in Rio Negro. Community leaders were continually detained and tortured by the army and the infamous Guatemalan military intelligence, the G-2. Two opposition leaders to the dam were tortured and robbed of their documents, which included the reparation promises made by INDE and the residents' land titles. Their bodies were found a week later. According to witnesses, they were headed to a meeting with INDE.

Most Rio Negro residents tried to escape the violence, but where could they go? Many minded their business, hoping the nightmare would just go away. Others fled. A few joined the civil-defense patrols (PAC) set up by the Guatemalan army, hoping to display their loyalty to the army and thus earn some sort of protection from the violence. However, there were no safe options. When the nearby community of Xococ was attacked by guerrillas, ending in the death of five members of the Xococ PAC and the burning of its central market, the residents of Rio Negro were blamed.[23]

On February 13, 1982, 54 men from Rio Negro traveled by foot to Xococ in order to collect their identification cards that were previously seized under orders of the Guatemalan military. The men had been accused of being guerrillas by the Guatemalan army and Xococ PAC.

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The 54 men were accompanied by 19 women and children. Before reaching Xococ, they were intercepted by the Xococ PAC. At least 71 people were brutally murdered this day. Many of the women and children were raped and most of the group was tortured before being slaughtered. Many had their feet, noses, cheeks, and ears cut off before bleeding to death.[24] After hearing of the news from a survivor, the remaining men of Rio Negro fled to the mountains,[25] leaving only women and children behind. The vengeance, however, did not stop.

Exactly one month later, the Guatemalan army and the Xococ PAC entered Rio Negro fully armed. They pillaged and torched the homes, destroyed the land, and stole or slaughtered the animals. The military and paramilitary forces rounded up all of the women and children and accused them of collaborating with the guerrillas. Together they proceeded to rape, torture, and murder *everyone*. Some 177 human beings, including 107 children, were massacred on the 13th of March, 1982, in Rio Negro. The few survivors, mostly young boys, were forced into slavery.[26] In *The Rio Negro Massacres*, survivor Jesús Tecú described being enslaved by a leader of the Xococ PAC, a man who ripped his youngest brother out of his arms and swung him by his feet, smashing his brains against rocks in front of his eyes because his wife was "not used to caring for [such] a small child."

The survivors of Rio Negro and the surrounding villages had witnessed many of their loved ones die in the mountains from hunger and disease while hiding from the army and patrollers. When the Guatemalan government offered an amnesty to all civilians, many people reluctantly accepted, not knowing the true intentions of the military. Some Rio Negro residents who turned themselves in were tortured and killed for being former guerrilla collaborators. The rest were forced to live in Pacux under strict military control. As Jesús Tecú stated in *The Rio Negro Massacres*: "The Amnesty Decree was used to trick the survivors and to take them to the Military Bases in Guatemala, saving the soldiers the trouble of looking for them in the mountains."[27]

### YELLING IN THEIR EAR

Many residents of Pacux are at the forefront of the human rights struggle in Guatemala. Some have risked their lives by giving their public testimonies in the national genocide cases. Others are members of the AJR and CALDH, both of whom have lead the charge in the national genocide cases. Many survivors of *la violencia* work with a variety of organizations centered on human, women, and indigenous rights.

ADIVIMA is one community organization responsible for, among other things, the exhumation of clandestine cemeteries that are scattered throughout Rabinal. It was also partly responsible for the sentencing of three ex-PAC members of Xococ. This was the first and only time in Guatemalan history that those responsible for one of the hundreds of massacres committed during the 1980s were sentenced in a Guatemalan court of law. Another trial against other members of the Xococ PAC was recently postponed by a judge, bringing the legal process to a halt. However, the accused still remain in jail thanks to the courage of the witnesses, some of whom braved threats to testify.

Some residents are involved in other

local community matters, including the recuperation of historical memory. ECAP is an organization that has worked with the genocide survivor population, who has suffered severe psychological damage. ECAP meets with the survivors and accompanies the victims through especially strenuous times, such as during exhumations, testimonies, and the recovery of past abuses.

A number of local residents helped develop and construct the Rabinal Achí Community Museum. The museum continues to keep alive the historical memory of the violence inflicted on the people of the Rabinal region. It also sponsors community projects and events, and provides various services, such as a library, computer lab, meeting space, and an important exhibit specifically dedicated to the Mayan Achí culture and the historical memory of the genocide that occurred to the people.

Some residents are organizing for such things as reparations and compensation from the financiers of the Chixoy hydroelectric dam-specifically the World Bank, the International Development Bank, INDE, and the Guatemalan state. Since the early 1980s Rio Negro representatives have asked INDE to fulfill their promises to the community. The Organizing Committee of Communities Affected by the Chixoy Dam (COCAHICH) formed in 2002 to campaign for the people affected by the creation of the dam. It has demanded adequate compensation for the loss of livelihoods, land, homes, and culture that the indigenous people suffered from the displacement (the dam forcibly displaced and caused the loss of livelihood of thousands of people and lead to the massacres of over 376 people of ethnic Mayan Achí descent[28]). The State response was to arrest and charge nine members of COCAHICH for alleged crimes against the security of the state, committed during a peaceful demonstration at the dam in 2004.

### VIOLENT NEGLECT

To an outsider, Pacux seems like the trailer park of its sister city, Rabinal. Crumbling roads and inadequate and poorly constructed housing are two of the most noticeable problems in Pacux. The community was promised cement houses by INDE with high-quality fiberglass roofs. The residents received 150 houses of low quality. The INDE houses were built of rotting wood, practically on top of one another. According to residents, the structural improvements have been financed out of their own pockets, not the pockets of the Guatemalan state or INDE, as promised. The population continues to grow, complicating matters further. There is no land or materials to construct new houses for new families. It is not uncommon to witness four families living in a single-room house that measures some 35 squared meters.

In Rio Negro there was an abundance of fertile land due to the river. Pacux has no such luxury. The residents have access to little local land. What land they do have is often rocky terrain. This coincides with a scarcity of water. Hence, more work is needed to cultivate the crops, meaning less time for paid work or side projects such as growing vegetables and making clothing for money. Child labor is often essential for the survival of families. On a stroll through the Rabinal market, it is common to witness young boys from Pacux working as newspaper vendors or shoeshine boys. Due to the lack of fertile land and job opportunities, families do not have opportunities and resources to improve upon their daily lives, translating into a lack of basic necessities. This was never the case in Rio Negro.

Water and electricity are serious problems in Pacux as well. With months of water scarcity, families are forced to cook and bathe with the water from a small river nearby. It is polluted with garbage from local residents and the community health center. INDE promises of free and consistent potable water to the residents have not been fulfilled. Residents pay every month for water that does not come consistently. The electrical situation is no better. INDE reneged on its promise of free electricity two years ago. Now electricity costs money that many do not have. Maintenance support is not included in the services. When a transformer breaks, residents go without power, often for long periods of time.

With cramped living conditions, little to no access to nearby terrain, and scarce possibilities for employment, the youth have few options within the community. Youth alienation and disappointment is commonplace. Many migrate to other towns in search of work and a sense of belonging. Guatemala City is a popular destination. Some adapt well to life in the big city. Others return with a more hardened outlook, possessing newly found street-survival skills. A great many turn to the bottle, drugs, or gangs to escape. A few even emigrate to the United States, leaving behind their young wives and newborns for years, or forever.

Due to the tough living conditions, inner-community violence affects everyone. Gangs have found their footing. Robberies and even murders are not unheard of, with around twelve murders in the last few months within the region. Many residents tell me that they are afraid to walk the streets at night in Pacux. The recent surge in violence has affected families that accompaniers know personally. The local government and police refuse to help, stating that they are already stretched too thin.

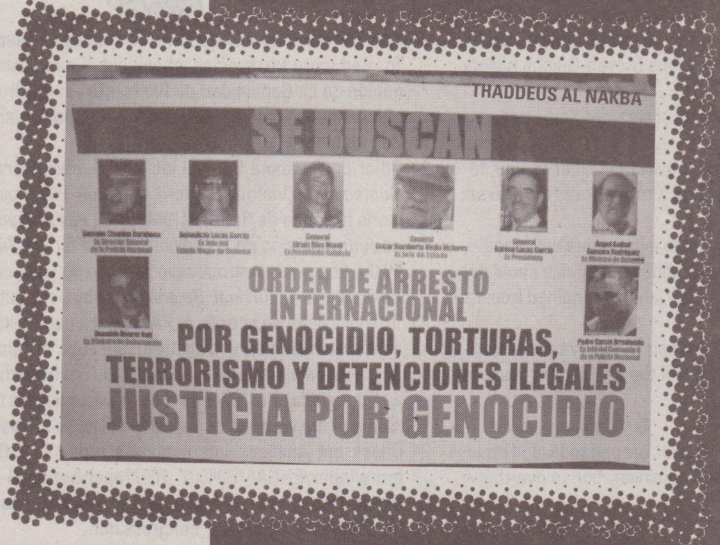
### THE RIGHT TO SMILE

The power structure responsible for the genocide was never dismantled after the 1996 Peace Accords. Genocide survivors and their families are attempting to chip away at the impunity that exists for the worst human rights abusers by seeking justice through legal means. They do this at great risk to their lives because the Guatema-

lan state does not provide a secure environment for those struggling for human rights. The government has done nothing to push the national genocide cases forward after seven years. The government doesn't have the political will to cooperate with the Spanish warrants and extradition orders. Since the Guatemalan state will do absolutely nothing, it is the job of the international community to pressure the United States and Guatemalan governments to push the genocide cases forward, where it is no risk to their own lives.

As I sip sweet coffee with Pablo on the steps of his cramped wooden house in Pacux, it's not difficult to see the injustice around me. The metal roof makes the intense rays of the sun blisteringly hot. Pablo's neighbors are frying tortillas, and the smoke piles into his house that sits literally a foot away. Some smoke escapes due to the holes in the rotting walls, going directly into our eyes. I glance to the side of the house and notice newly crammed cement blocks where the foundation should have been. I keep thinking about the stories the people have told me about life in Rio Negro. Although I have never been to Rio Negro, I can honestly say *Pacux is no Rio Negro*.

In the middle of our conversation about the Guatemalan professional soccer league, I think in amazement of the wonderful people from this small village continuing to work and live their daily lives. The daily grind continues...and yet many still have the energy and spirit to fight for justice, knowing all too well that it may not produce concrete results within their lifetime. I remember the conversation I had with Samael and how many Guatemalans have given up hope for a better life, leading to mass migrations to other places, especially the United States. I remember something Samael told me: "Tell your own people what is going on here. Tell them our stories. Tell them how we suffered. And tell them we need justice to move forward with our lives."




### THE GENOCIDE CASES

The Truth Commission strongly recommended that the Guatemalan authorities prosecute those with the most responsibility for the serious human rights violations committed during *la violencia*, especially those who planned and directed the atrocities. This report, along with *Guatemala: Nunca Más*, helped the victims struggling for justice charge those responsible.

*The National Cases:* In 2000 and 2001, two national genocide cases were initiated in the Guatemalan courts by the Association for Justice and Reconciliation (AJR), through its legal counsel the Center for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH). Charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide were presented against the high commands of Garcia and Montt. The AJR was formed by 22 remote, indigenous communities who suffered massacres under Montt and Garcia from October 1981 to December 1982.

A special prosecutor (Ministerio Público [MP]) was appointed by the Attorney General to the cases due to CALDH's request. The state took testimonies from over 100 eye-witnesses, conducted site inspections of the massacres in a number of villages, and collected forensic evidence from exhumations in the communities. Yet the domestic genocide cases have languished for over seven years in the investigative stage, due to a lack of political will by the MP. The AJR has formally requested the MP to begin the next stage in the process by calling on Rios Montt to testify, but it continues to ignore this request. The AJR and CALDH have presented formal complaints to the Guatemalan courts, demanding Rios Montt's initial statement in order to finally formally accuse him of genocide. There has been no response.

One recent development has not gone the way of Congressional candidate Rios Montt. In April of 2007 Rios Montt's legal team filed a motion that demanded that the classified documents in the military archives from the early 1980s remain classified information barred from being used as evidence in the genocide case. These plans would implicate the man who has thus far claimed ignorance for the actions of his subordinates. Montt doesn't want military plans to leave the archives since he personally signed his approval to massacres of innocents.

On July 19, 2007, the Guatemalan courts denied the motion filed by the Department of Defense and said that archived military documents must be submitted in the case against Montt. Thus the Ministry of Defense must now provide certified copies of the military plans to the Guatemalan court. The MP and the AJR will be able to use this information in the genocide case against Montt.

*The Spanish Case:* In June of 2006, a Spanish investigative commission flew to Guatemala with the intension of taking public testimonies of the accused. Three ex-presidents (Rios Montt, the late Lucas Garcia, and Mejía Victores) and their high commands are accused of torture, terrorism, and genocide committed between 1978 and 1986. The Spanish case is based on "universal jurisdiction," a principle approving prosecution of especially egregious crimes against humanity, prosecutable in the courts of any country, regardless of where the crimes took place.

The defendants filed over a dozen appeals to avoid being questioned, which caused Guatemala's Constitutional Court to suspend the hearing indefinitely. This didn't stop Judge Santiago Pedraz to issue international arrest warrants and a freezing of assets against all eight former state officials, including the ex-presidents. Interpol processed the international arrest orders, preventing the accused from leaving Guatemala. On November 7, 2006 a Guatemalan court issued arrest orders for four of the men, two of whom (both SOA graduates) were arrested. The extradition requests for the other three living men haven't lead to arrest warrants by the courts due to their power and influence.

I snap back into reality as my conversation with Pablo returns to the topic of Rio Negro. Pablo witnessed the death of his family, and survived in the mountains as a small child for two and half years, living off of whatever nature provided. In 1984 Pablo was transplanted in Pacux with the government amnesty. "*Estamos bien jodidos aquí*. The government does not respond. We never received compensation for everything that was lost-my family, our land, our houses, our animals, our lives, everything." But he continues, "Only when the men responsible for the massacres are convicted... Only when my family receives compensation for what was lost, for what we suffered... Only then will I be able to sleep well and smile. This is why I continue the struggle." ✮

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# ENDNOTES

1. The Popol Vuh, or Popul Wuj, is a book written in the classical Mayan-Quiché language. It is an important contribution to the indigenous Mayan-Quiché history and culture.
2. All names of witnesses have been changed for reasons of security. Some descriptions of events have been slightly altered as well.
3. To read more about the US involvement in the overthrow of the Guatemalan democracy, check out Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer's book, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala.*
4. Arbenz's agrarian reform empowered the government to expropriate only uncultivated portions of large plantations. Fully worked plantations of any size could not be touched. The government would pay the value of the land, determined from its declared taxable worth.
5. Today Guatemala has the most unequal land distribution in the Western Hemisphere. The large landholders (who comprise only 2% of the population) possess around 70% of the total cultivable land.
6. See *Bitter Fruit.*
7. See William Blum's *Killing Hope* for the sequence of terror, propaganda, and physical violence used by the UFC, CIA, and Eisenhower administration to overthrow the democratically-elected Arbenz government.
8. See above.
9. McClinton, Michael, *The American Connection Volume 2: State Terror and Popular Resistance in Guatemala.* London: Zed Books Ltd., 1985.
10. See Jennifer Schirmer's book, *The Guatemalan Military Project: A Violence Called Democracy.* Schirmer documents the military's role in human rights violations through interviews of high-ranking military officials.
11. *Report for Historical Clarification: Guatemala Memory of Silence* (AAAS, 1999) at http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/report/english/toc.html, or replace the word "english" with "spanish" for the website's Spanish version. Also check out Proyecto Inderdicesano de Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (REMHI): *Guatemala: Nunca Más* (versión reducida) (ODHAG, 1998) at www.odhag.org.gt/INFREMHI/Default.htm. Publishing this massive text cost its author, Monsignor Juan Gerardi, his life.
12. See above.
13. Ambassador Frederick Chapin told Congress: "Over the past three months, most of the killings in the rural areas have been done by the insurgents... (the army massacres) simply haven't taken place." Americas Watch, *Guatemala Revised: How the Reagan Administration Finds "Improvements" in Human Rights in Guatemala.* New York: Americas Watch Committee, 1985.
14. "Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters on the President's Trip to Latin America." *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1982/120482g.htm (accessed 24 August 2007).
15. "Remarks in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, Following a Meeting With President Jose Efrain Rios Montt of Guatemala, December 4, 1982." *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1982/120482f.htm (accessed 24 August 2007).
16. La Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico (CEH), "Caso ilustrativo No. 31, Masacre de las Dos Erres," *Guatemala: Memoria del Silencio* (AAAS, 1999), Tomo VI, p. 397, accesible at http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/mds/spanish/anexo1/vol1/no31.html.
17. See footnote 11.
18. Under Guatemalan amnesty laws, persons accused of genocide, torture, and forced disappearances cannot be granted immunity from prosecution and conviction, no matter what position of power he may hold.
19. Universal jurisdiction was most famously utilized in the 1998 arrest of former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet on torture charges in London at the request of a Spanish court.
20. See *The Rio Negro Massacres*, written by massacre survivor Jesús Tecú Osorio. To read more testimonies, check out "Caso Ilustrativo No. 10, Masacre y Eliminación de La Comunidad de Rio Negro" in the Truth Commission report found at http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/mds/spanish/anexo1/vol1/no10.html.
21. See footnote 11.
22. Other books about Rabinal include: *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala* by Victoria Sanford; Oj K'aslik-Estamos Vivos: Recuperación de la memoria histórica de Rabinal (1944-1996); *Las Masacres en Rabinal: Estudio Histórico Antropológico de las Masacres de Plan de Sánchez, Chichupac y Río Negro* by the Equipo de Antropología Forense de Guatemala; *Violencia Política y Poder Comunitario en Rabinal, Baja Verapaz* by Dora Ruth del Valle Cóbar.
23. The civil defense patrols, or PACs, were paramilitary groups of civilians set up by the Guatemalan army with the justification of fighting subversives and guerrillas. The Guatemalan state knew that it did not have the manpower to be everywhere in Guatemala, thus it set up these civilian patrols to do the dirty work of the army. Some of the worst atrocities in the "civil war" were by the hands of these PACs.
24. Check out Amnesty International's report in 2007 at http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR34007 2007?open&of=ENG-346. Also check out Human Rights Defender's web site at http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/defenders/hrd_guatemala/alert_071107_congress.htm.
25. From analyzing the actions of INDE and the military, it seems obvious that they planned to clear the region for the construction of the dam and its reservoir with a mass exodus of the people through terror, force, and violence. This is an ongoing struggle for the indigenous people of Guatemala-the struggle against mega-projects and resource extraction financed by the international community, often under the rhetoric of democracy and free trade. James Rodriguez's picture blog, which includes a great piece of the Guatemalan *coyuntura* can be found at http://mimundo-jamesrodriguez-esp.blogspot.com/search?q=james+rodriguez . Check out Kimberly Kern's article at http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/719/1/, Sandra Cuffe's March 2006 articles at http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/237/1/, http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/860/1/. Check out two YouTube documentaries about the suffering the mining industry is causing the Guatemalan people at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q20YxkM-CGI, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46OBtg04AJQ.
26. It could have been a decoy by the army, but a message was tagged: "Long Live the Río Negro EGP."
27. Most of the information about the massacres was taken from conversations and from *The Rio Negro Massacres.*
28. Many of these survivors were forced to live in the mountains around the Chixoy River for over two years. According to a witness, it was not uncommon for children and the elderly to die of hunger and illness. Throughout *la violencia*, hundreds of thousands fled to all corners of Guatemala neighboring countries. Those who stayed in Guatemala often lived in roaming "communities in resistance" in order to escape the brutality of the state. Thousands died in the mountains due to diseases, hunger, hypothermia, and bombardment from army helicopters.
29. The testimonies of the boys can be found in the Truth Commission report at http://shr.aaas.org/guatemala/ceh/mds/spanish/anexo1/vol1/no14.html.
30. Tecú Osorio, Jesús, *The Rio Negro Massacres*, 2003.
31. *A People Dammed: The World Bank-Funded Chixoy Hydroelectric Project and its Devastating Impacts on the People and Economy of Guatemala*, Witness for Peace, Washington, DC, May 1996. This report can be found at www.witnessforpeace.org/publications/. The report describes how the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank gave two loans for the construction and maintenance of the Chixoy Dam, including one in 1985, well after the massacres took place. The report concluded that the World "Bank is implicated in the horrors perpetrated against the village of Rio Negro in 1982."

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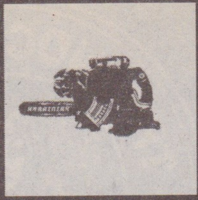

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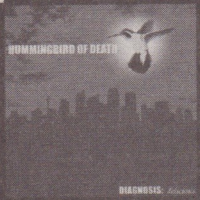


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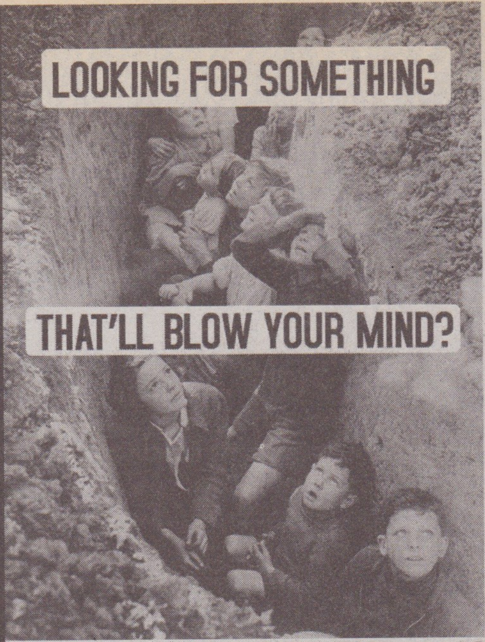


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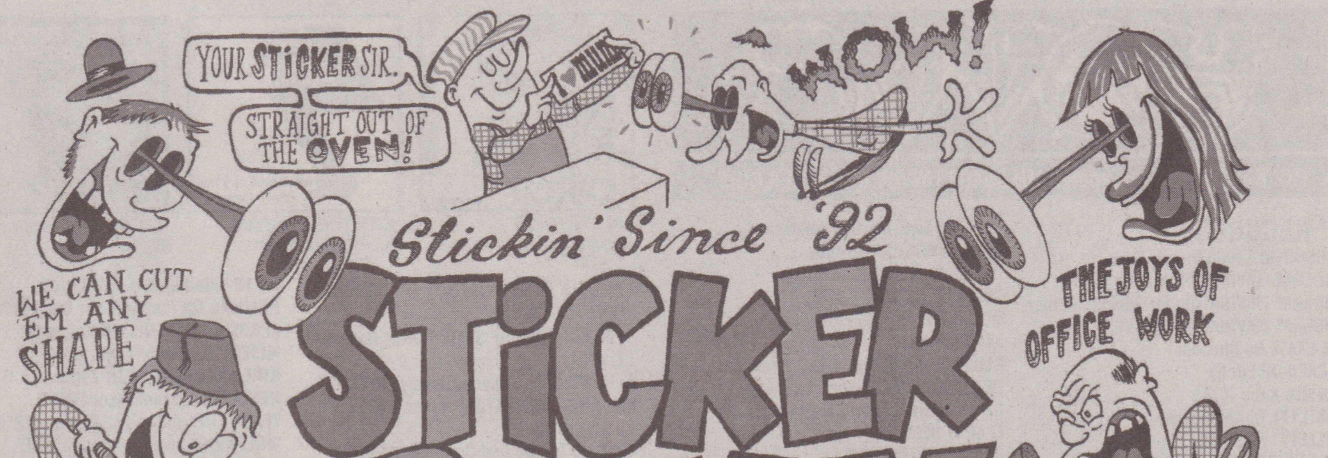


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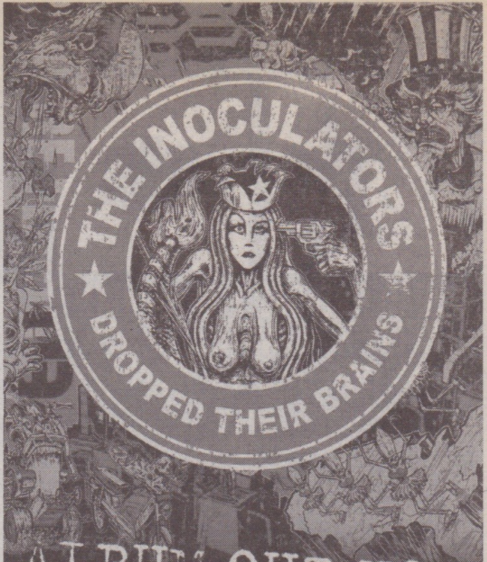


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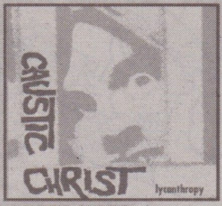
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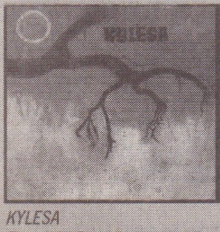
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# LEFTOVER CRACK

LEFTOVER CRACK

*Over the last six years, Leftover Crack from New York City have firmly established themselves in the political punk scene. The band is fronted by the outspoken Stza Crack. Despite his busy schedule recording and touring, I got to sit down and talk with Stza about politics, his history (and current endeavors) playing punk rock, and the always enjoyable subject of killing pigs! Interview by Isaac Smith.*

**MRR: I must say that I became obsessed with *Deadline* for a while. What made this record significant?**

Stza: Well, I like *Deadline* a lot because we got Citizen Fish on there and got their point of view from across the ocean—though they're also in one of the richest, most powerful countries in the world—and we brought together a bunch of artists that are really diverse but are all really like-minded in a way. We had Fly and we had the Bee-Hive Collective and Erik Drooker and Dick Lucas from Subhumans and Citizen Fish. I think that makes the record good, the way the art is set up.

**MRR: Whose decision was it to cover each other's bands?**

Stza: Hmm, it was my idea I guess. It was exciting for me…maybe I tricked Citizen Fish into recognizing songs that we wrote and getting to play a Subhumans song and a Citizen Fish song is really cool. I didn't know if they were going to go for it. But, those guys are really cool and also really into trying to make the world a better place.

**MRR: The record on both the Citizen Fish and Leftover Crack sides seemed to be more ecologically themed. Was that intentional?**

Stza: Well, it's definitely got an environmental theme to it. I think the original theme that we talked about was to do a record together and to have the overall theme be that the planet is going to die…well, the planet's not going to die but people are going to die using up the planet's resources and we're going to kill a lot of the wildlife. I mean, of course this planet will probably survive long after humans are gone, but ya know, maybe not if we blow the whole thing up.

**MRR: What was it like getting to work with Dave Dictor and Jello Biafra?**

Stza: Oh, it was great. I mean, between them and Dick Lucus, those guys were my political influences when I was a teenager, especially starting with MDC and the Dead Kennedys from the States. I mean, luckily when I got into punk rock I think the first record that I had was *Give Me Convenience or Give Me Death* by the Dead Kennedys. It changed my whole worldview, really. That's when I started opening to things that I wasn't looking at or that I didn't want to, maybe. I feel like when I was around 13 years old I was definitely had the same mind-set as most ignorant white adult Americans that are my age now. I can see what they are thinking because I was one of them when I was little. It's hard because it's hard to blame people when they are being lied to all the time. But, the people are to blame. Like your friend who didn't want to think about politics and was mad at you for mentioning politics—that's how the whole United States is. The government keeps them entertained so they don't have to think about the real issues. They'd rather hear about celebrities going to jail or whatever. It's ridiculous, especially when you know the things you know to be true. If you repeat something everyday over and over in every newspaper and every media outlet on television, people will believe it.

**MRR: And on the other side of that, if you can get enough people to repeat the truth you can sort of use that mentality effectively.**

Stza: It just doesn't seem like there are that many people who want to invest their whole lives in that. They'd rather have a family and worry about their children.

**MRR: Which is even more frustrating because if you worry about your children at all you can't let this shit go.**

Stza: I notice a lot of people that change their politics from being left-wing or

whatever to being right-wing and it's because they have children and they start thinking "is my child safe?" and they start being spooked by the lies in the paper.

**MRR: What do you think about our situation in this country right now?**

Stza: Well, I mean, it's like we were talking; it's legal for people to listen in to our conversation right now and it's probably legal for them to use it as evidence. The Patriot Act took away our last little fighting hope... Also, the media is the biggest lobby in Washington. They are bigger than tobacco or cars or anything. The media gives the most money to the government and deals with them the most. We've had two government elections that were fixed by the media basically. They helped fix them and helped legitimize those elections. I've heard these horror stories about these third-world countries that can't have a real democratic election because everything is so corrupt. But, we're living in a time where our government is as corrupt as these governments that they try and demonize.

**MRR: Do you think they do that to divert our attention away from what they are doing?**

Stza: Yeah, definitely. Basically the way it goes—and this is an old saying—is that if a lie is repeated enough, like in the media, it will become the truth.

**MRR: Does the song "Clear Channel (Fuck Off!)" have anything to do with that issue?**

Stza: That has to do with the monopolization of media and how Clear Channel, after the FCC's deregulation of radio in the '90s under the Clinton administration, bought up all these radio stations and homogenized music. And not only music—they homogenized politics too. They stopped playing certain music after 9/11. A lot of bands were banned from the radio, ya know, like even the Dixie Chicks. I mean, I like the Dixie Chicks...I don't listen to them but I like that they actually said something. There are a lot of bands with people that are just as famous as the president that could have said shit but didn't because they knew that they would not be played on the radio and they wouldn't be getting a check. They wanted to be making their living or whatever, even though they are already millionaires anyway. I think the media is almost completely responsible for that. Because when you have a real independent and free media then you can have a real democracy.

**MRR: But, that won't ever happen...**

Stza: Well, I think the best thing we can hope for is the bottom falling out...the bottom rotting out and leaving everyone in some kind of chaos, ya know? It might happen in our lifetime. But in this country it's set up so that when the bottom does fall out...people will be attacking each other and people won't cooperate. It won't be some sort of paradise or utopia. It'll be...everyone's going to be killing each other...ya know, a race war or whatever the government has been setting people up to think over the past 20 or 30 years since the media has gotten really bad, really monopolized.

**MRR: So, since you were 17, this sort of shit has really influenced your writing? I mean, obviously there was Choking Victim and now there is Leftover Crack and odds are bands before both of those...**

Stza: Yeah, and another band called No Commercial Value. That's where we started it, and some of the songs we play now are still NCV songs.

**MRR: Which songs?**

Stza: I think we ended up swapping

lyrics and music with a lot of stuff. "Fuck America" was two different No Commercial Value songs. "Five Finger Discount" was the original music for "Fuck America," stuff like that.

**MRR: You've played in a number of bands over the last 16+ years, but was Choking Victim one of the first bigger bands you were in?**

Stza: Well, umm, no, actually when Choking Victim existed and were playing shows, no one really knew we existed. We never really made it out of New York City much. We played in Philadelphia a couple of times, Boston a couple times. We played in Canada…once. But, when Choking Victim was happening, nobody really knew who we were. I mean, we put out 7"s, and we started to get a little bit of an underground following, but still we never drew more than a couple hundred people to a show ever and that was usually us playing with a bunch of bands, like a punk fest. There would be maybe a handful of people who knew who we were and were interested in seeing us. But, mostly they were there because there were ten other punk bands playing at C-Squat or one of the other squats. Or ABC No Rio, we would end up being asked to play the club at the last minute because another band that nobody really knew about were coming from out of town and they knew that the show might not be empty if all of our friends would come down from the squat. Nobody really had money for the show but it was more of a situation where ABC No Rio wanted there to be a people there to make the show more relevant when there were bands they knew about but none of the kids in New York City knew who the bands were. So we'd bring our crowd and there'd be 30 or 40 kids that didn't have any more for the show. It's funny because we'd be asked always a couple of days before the show to play, so we wouldn't be on the flyers usually and we'd play the show and then after the show the people volunteering at the place would kind of give us dirty looks because they were mad at us because all of the people that came to see it didn't pay. We wouldn't really get paid to play. For most of our career we didn't have any equipment. I mean, I had my guitar, our drummer had a snare and drumsticks, and our bassist had a bass. But, we didn't have a vehicle; we didn't know anyone with a car. We grew up in New York City or were squatting in New York City and we didn't know anybody who had any money or who had a friend of a friend who had a car that would drive us to a show. So, we'd just have to put all of our stuff into one of those old post office canvas carts. For some reason we had some that we kept in our squat. We called them rubble carts because we had this one long hallway full of rubble that they were always working on. Constantly tearing up old shit and trying to rebuild it so that it would be more structurally sound. So, we'd have all this rubble, all this old sheet rock, unusable wood, and we'd throw them in there and twice a week on garbage day we'd have to go out front at, like, 6 or 7 in the morning and wait for the garbage truck to show up and we'd all have to go out there and dump our garbage because the city wouldn't do it. They didn't want to lift a finger to help us. But, the garbage guy had to stop there if we had garbage. So really quickly we'd have to get these 400 lbs carts full of rubble and dump those into the garbage trucks as fast as we could. We'd have everybody in the building do it…hopefully. A lot of times people would slack off and not do it and everybody would get mad at those people. So we'd empty one of those and put all of our equipment in it and we'd wheel it down to Rivington Street where ABC No Rio is. But, that was our tour van, a rubble cart.

**MRR: Punk rock has sort of been given the label of being very disorganized. But, how do you suggest punk kids or adults or anyone getting organized and involved?**

Stza: It is disorganized and here is one of the things—there is a lot of scene fighting. I think a lot of people get kind of discouraged from trying to fight the biggest enemies. It makes them go a little crazy and then they start turning in on each other…like this guy isn't washing his dishes, this guy isn't labeling his food in the fridge, this guy is a tight-ass, and this guy is a crusty, this guy's a punk, this guy's a skin, and they start having these sub-groups and it starts making them feel some sort of subtle smug satisfaction to try and exclude somebody and kick them out of their scene because of the fact that they can't get organized and we can't seem to win any of these battles that we are trying so hard to organize and fight. I think that one thing people could do is put aside their differences when there are more important things in the world to fight for.

**MRR: Do you think there is a good way to live your live, making enough money to live comfortably?**

Stza: I dunno…I mean, I live comfortably. It all depends on your definition of comfort. I mean, comfort to me is if you have food to eat and if you have shelter over your head. Sometimes Leftover Crack goes on tour in the UK and we make a bunch of money. I try to help people out. Maybe there's a cause. Maybe somebody needs to be bailed out of jail. Maybe there's something I know that I can directly affect by giving money to, I'll do that.

**MRR: In a lot of the songs Leftover Crack has done (and Choking Victim for that matter) make a lot of**

**references to crack and other drugs, not to mention the infamous 40oz—how much of that lifestyle do you guys live and how much of it is more ironic statements or button-pushing?**

Stza: Part of drinking for me is that the world we live in is so fucked up and it's so depressing that in order for me to get by and fucking cope I need to fucking drink. If you think of all the fucked up things going on in the world, it's a fucking heavy weight.

**MRR: Do you still smoke?**

Stza: Yeah, I smoke cigarettes...

**MRR: Or anything period?**

Stza: Umm, ya know what? I don't smoke much. I'll have a cigarette every once in a while. I didn't start smoking until I was 26 and I've been smoking for a few years. I dunno, it was a stupid thing to do. I don't know why I did it.

**MRR: I would assume that because of the name to Leftover Crack and the references to crack that you all smoked crack.**

Stza: Well, I'll tell you this: four out of the five members of our band have smoked a lot of crack at one point or another in our lives. That's definitely something that I was doing for a couple of years—mostly during the demise of Choking Victim—when I made up the name. I did a lot of drugs. I don't recommend them.

**MRR: Yeah, I was going to ask you that.**

Stza: Heh, no, I don't recommend drugs; I don't recommend drinking. I used to never drink until I was in my 20s, then I started drinking…a lot. Now I don't drink that much. I only drink at shows usually.

**MRR: There is some controversy in the scene about using MySpace and I was wondering what is Leftover Crack's view on the site?**

Stza: Well, MySpace helps us because we don't have a reliable website at this point. The thing about MySpace is, I don't own a computer. I don't know how to use one that well. But, our guitar player set up our Leftover Crack MySpace and whenever I want, I can go on it and write a blog or I can post a show that we are doing and make sure it gets done and posted right then and I don't have to talk to somebody that is more computer-savvy to get that show listed or to get some information out there about something that I want to talk about. So, it's really convenient for us. It's free. I also think it's cool because if I have the time I can go on there and check out people's posts and I can read about our fans. Ya know, who are our friends on MySpace? Who are these people? So, I go look at their profiles and check it out and you can keep in touch with fans in a way that you can't do at a show. There has been some censorship on MySpace and we've been involved in it. But, not to the extent that we would stop using it. They've deleted pictures… I don't know if you ever got to see the pictures of me "killing the cop."

**MRR: No…**

Stza: Well a policeman saw them and he said he was going to try and shut down our shows in New York. I don't know, he might have succeeded at this point because the police have now targeted us as a band that is not allowed to play in New York City. So, they go to any club that we book a show at and they threaten that they'd close the club down if they let us play, and most promoters are scared of that. Who isn't scared of the police, ya know…?

**MRR: What can you do about it?**

Stza: Well, here's the thing about the police: one thing people can do is not call them. I mean, there's people that claim to be punks and they call them on their neighbors playing music too loud or something. People call the police when they are afraid of something. But, when you call the police, you empower them to be in their life. If people didn't call the police, they wouldn't have an excuse or a reason to go into people's homes and harass the populous. I have called 911 once in my life. I was in Washington outside of my squat on S. 49th Street and I was walking across this bridge in this really abandoned part of town and I saw a car hit a pole and this woman got out and she was bleeding all over and she was obviously dazed and shocked. So, I ran over to a pay phone and called 911. But, that's the only time I've ever done that. I mean, I'm sure there are other instances where it's necessary.

**MRR: Like murder?**

Stza: Well, it all depends on what your definition of justice is. If your definition of justice is someone got murdered and someone should go to jail, then you call the cops. That's not my definition of justice.

**MRR: What's your definition of justice? Not to point any fingers or anything but...**

Stza: It's definitely bigger than calling the cops. I think that feeding the system more people to have in jail and to hold in jail...I mean, that's a big industry in itself. The prison industry, they have people in jail who make cigarettes and license plates—that's the stereotypical thing people make in jail. And the price people pay to put someone up in jail... and most of the people are locked up for petty crimes, victimless crimes, ya know? I dunno, I'm not pretending that I know the answers or solutions to these things. I try to keep an open mind. If you don't, if you become stubborn, then you are no better than someone who lives in ignorance.

**MRR: I think that about gets most of my questions. I did have one last thing, though. You are going out tomorrow to record with a band, who is that?**

Stza: I'm going to the West Coast to record with a band called Introspect. We've already collaborated on two songs and we're hoping to do four or five more together and hoping to have a record out sometime this year. I'm also working on a band called Star Fucking Hipsters which I'm trying to get a vocalist for. Right now it's just me and Ara, the drummer from Leftover Crack, and a guy named Frank from a band called The Degenerics from New Jersey. Also, we're going to try to go to Japan this year and Hawaii.

**MRR: Leftover Crack?**

Stza: Yeah, Leftover Crack.

**MRR: What sort of band will Star Fucking Hipsters be?**

Stza: We have like nine songs recorded but I haven't written all of the lyrics yet. It's still political. It's kind of the same as style as Choking Victim and Leftover Crack—there's a couple ska tunes. I want to do something with different people and do something a little more laid-back. I think that Leftover Crack is popular enough as far as I'm concerned and I want to do something maybe that wouldn't as mobbed. Sometimes we play shows and get mobbed and it's overwhelming to have 150 people want to talk to you. It makes me really reclusive. It makes feel like, after the tour's done and I try to live a regular life and talk to people, it's harder for me to deal with people on a one-to-one level for more than a few minutes because I'm used to these whirlwind tours. There are so many people that want to talk and I can only give them a couple minutes, ya know? I tend to drink a lot to cope with that. It makes it easier for me but then when the tours done I try not to drink. But, it usually takes me awhile to be able to function and talk to people in a normal way. It's taxing. I actually just want to go to the woods far away and not talk to people and just read books for a while because it's just so much in such a short amount of time. I try and give everyone the benefit of the doubt, I try and assume that everybody that I meet at a show is cool until they prove me otherwise.

**MRR: On an ending note, is there anything I've missed or anything that you want to have in this article that wasn't brought up?**

Stza: The two biggest things that I try to impress on people...the two biggest things you can do to help change the world are: Be aware of the police as an enemy presence. They are an occupying army in the US. Don't call them unless it's important. Find another way to deal with the situation. And, the other thing I try to impress on people is that by choosing products, thinking about the products you buy, what umbrella corporation owns what brand you are buying and what stores you shop at is really important. I'd rather spend an extra dollar and go to a smaller store. Buy local if you can: buy local produce and if you eat meat try and eat farm-raised cattle that's not tortured their whole lives. It's little decisions, such as if you're going to buy shampoo, don't buy a brand that tests on animals. It's things like that. If people could be a little more aware of what they are supporting, who their money is going to after they pay for these things... You don't always have to spend money. I mean, you can eat out of the garbage. But, you will be labeled crazy eventually and probably end up in jail or some kind of asylum.

**MRR: How have you avoided that?**

Stza: I pretend that I'm an artist haha!

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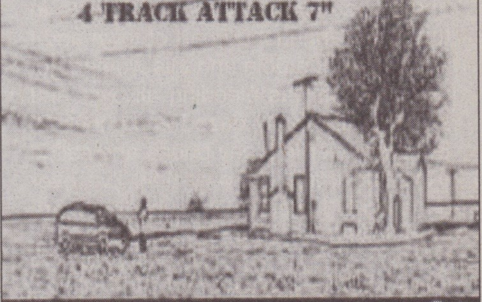

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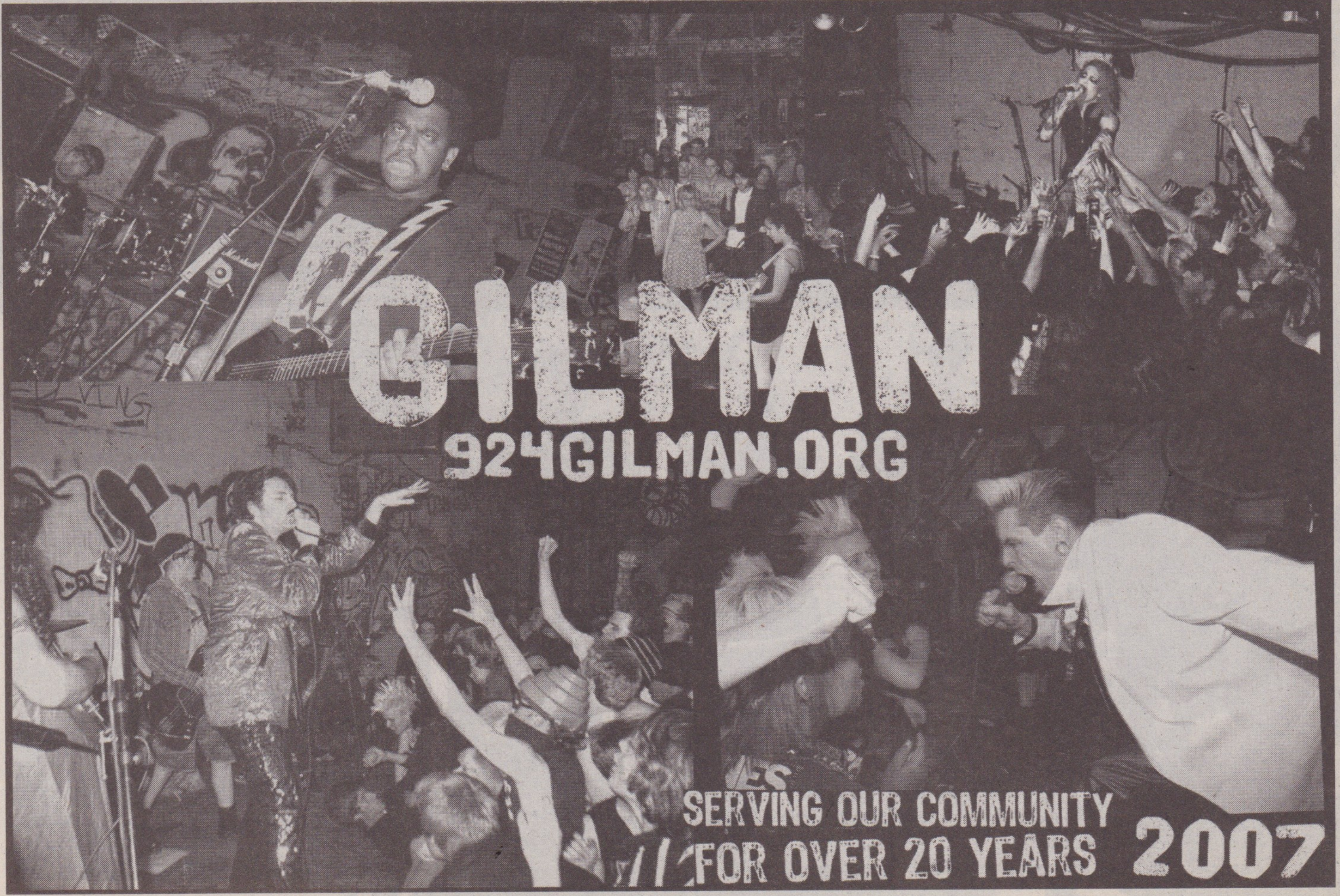

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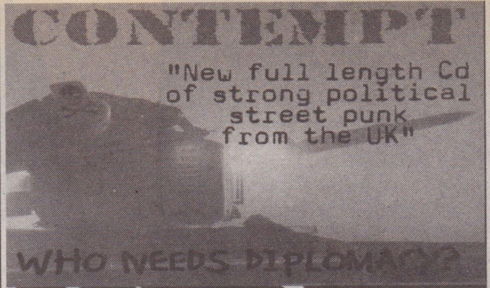


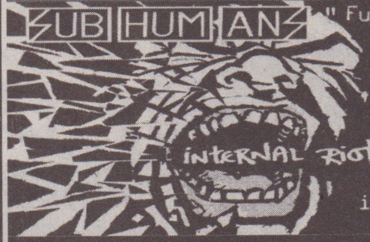


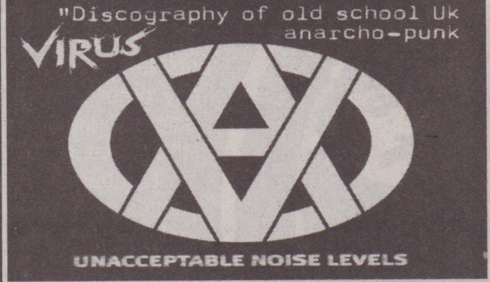


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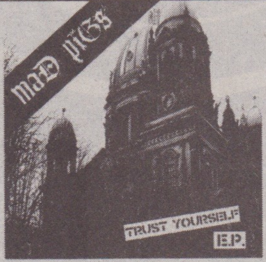


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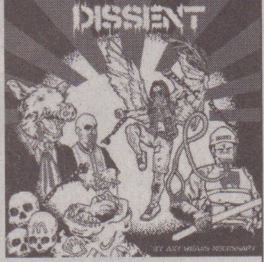


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ACCEPTANCE OF WHAT

# THE STORY OF AOA

By Lance Hahn

It's been hypothesized that in the States, the use of initials as band names was in some ways influenced by gang culture. With one of the first groups to use initials being TSOL and their relationship to one of the first "punk gangs," Vicious Circle, the name took on an added dimension of terror. At the time there was a proliferation of punk graffiti competing with gang tags. The result was that band names like T.S.O.L. could both mock and co-opt a sort of street tough. As gangs became more and more evident in the Los Angeles hardcore scene, some punk graffiti became indistinguishable from the gang tags.

Mike Watt, in We Got The Neutron Bomb: "They had a big posse around them... just before they were TSOL they had this thing called Vicious Circle, which wasn't even a band yet. VC just rounded up all these psychos and guys they grew up with and then punk became a gang thing that everybody went with, the whole neighborhood went with it."

But by then, new bands with no gang ties were equally excited by the idea of using initials for a name. TSOL seemed, to outsiders, almost avant-garde in their selecting a moniker unlike any other in rock music. In a way, the name seemed like a scientific label and was postmodern in an accidental way. In the states, groups like MDC would take on this approach. Over in Edinburgh, AOA did the same. Interestingly enough, both bands would change the meanings of their names with each release. MDC went from Millions of Dead Cops to Multi Death Corporation to Millions of Dead Children, etc. For AOA, what started out as All Out Attack went through several changes.

Guitarist Scott Paton: "I played guitar with friends Bruce Wagener on bass, Anthony Mallin on drums, and Steven Telford on lead vocals. Previous incarnations of AOA included Virus, Self-Destruct, Disaster Area, and Condemned, but we stuck with All Out Attack for the initial stages until we finally decided just to use the initials AOA. The name All Out Attack actually came from the first 7" single by the English punk band Blitz, as some of your readers may remember. All Out Attack perfectly described our music, philosophy, and the sign of the times: early-'80s, the threat of nuclear war, unemployment, misery, and pessimism: 'anarchist punk' was our vehicle for individual thought and a way to express our ideas and feelings through our own distinctive musical meanderings. This became our call to the anarchy sign, which was incorporated into our symbol: two A's in a circle representing the letters AOA."

With Edinburgh one of the least likely urban centers to start a thriving anarcho scene, it was just as likely that a band could come from the otherwise disrespected suburbs.

Scott: "In the late-'70s/early-'80s, coming from a place called Loanhead, a small mining town in the suburbs of Edinburgh, Scotland, I suppose it was inevitable that my inherent fascination for music was manifesting itself into listening to something a bit different from the norm! So in 1982, as a response to the small-town mentality and deep anger at the manipulation of our liberties, AOA was conceived and born kicking and screaming."

AOA

If Edinburgh was far removed from London, where much of the anarcho scene was based, the suburbs of Loanhead must've been like another planet as far as following already somewhat secretive underground trends. It's in places like this that an overall media blackout affects those inspired by the ideas of punk who want to actually put some of them into practice. Even yet, the biggest groups of the day could still be discovered and make some impact.

Scott: "As far as other bands we were listening to at the time, Crass was a big influence and certainly changed our way of thinking, and obviously the more noisy bands like the aforementioned Blitz and some of the more politically active British bands, with a good dose of Dead Kennedys, always made for a good angry cocktail. But I suppose Discharge was our main musical influence at the time, and subsequently we came to be known as the 'Scottish Discharge.' Discharge's guitarist, Bones, was actually my main influence in guitar playing style."

Fortunately, there were several likeminded bands in the area that had already become somewhat established and were willing to help out.

Scott: "Closer to home we started playing gigs with local bands, including the likes of Alternative, Threats, and Oi Polloi, to name but a few. Various local establishments were commandeered for these early noise-fests, including public bars and local community and church halls, which accommodated the antiestablishment hoards. The All Out Attack was inevitable!"

With no regular venue in the area for bands like AOA, the scene first relied on independently renting halls and finding pubs for one-off gigs. But as those options dwindled, any chance to perform took shape in punk picnics, free outdoor events that became a staple of punk especially in the mid-to-late-'80s.

Scott: "In these early days, playing to a burgeoning local scene was certainly an interesting 'learning curve' to say the least! In the true sense of the words, it was a totally 'Do It Yourself' attitude. Many of the established venues were out of touch and out of tune and obviously oblivious to up-and-coming bands looking for somewhere to play. So we had to improvise and do what was necessary, taking any and every chance to organize a live event, be it playing at the local students union or, on occasion, manhandling a power generator across to an island for an ensuing 'Punks Picnic.' As for getting help and support slots with other local 'name bands' was concerned, they had their own agendas...getting oneself a 'punk career' seemed to be their war cry, was then and still is.

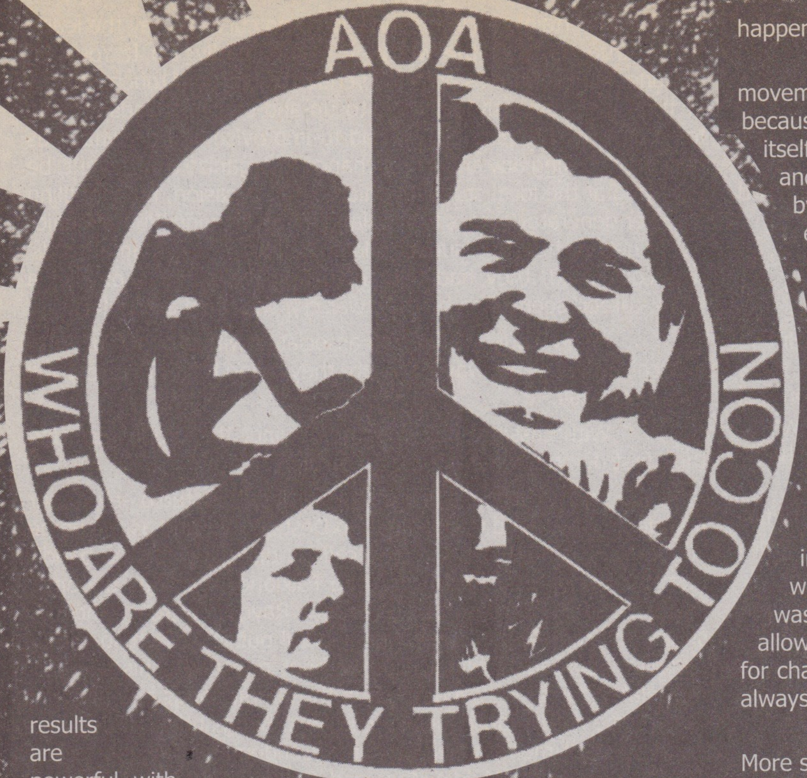
"Who would want to be associated with a bunch of 'dirty anarchists' like us anyway? Who are they trying to con? History will speak for itself."

With cassette culture in full swing, the group recorded their first demo tape as soon as possible.

Scott: "Recorded on a four-track home studio setup, our first demo was called Condemned to Destruction, and as the name suggests, it is now lost due to a callous disregard for the band's first musical efforts. Back then, the Falklands war was ongoing, Prime Sinister Thatcher and President Raygun were calling the shots, and the ever so sheep-like general public was oh so willing to follow its leaders blindly and without question. This gave us the related topics we sang about in these first songs and also the fuel for the fire in subsequent recordings. Songs titles on that first demo were, if memory serves right: 'Condemned to Destruction,' 'Victims of Society,' 'Middle Man,' and 'State of Shock.'"

As is the case with most demo tapes, it's been lost in time, as are the songs which were never re-recorded on subsequent AOA releases.

Eventually the group got some money together and decided to record five more songs. This time going into a proper studio, the




results are powerful, with great drum sounds reminiscent of early Conflict records and a wall-of-sound guitar.

Scott: "Our next foray into the studio was a more reactionary affair. The song 'Who Are They Trying to Con' was becoming a bit of an anthem at gigs, so we had to get a recording done whatever the cost. As it turned out, we heard of a good local sixteen-track studio, so we got five songs in the can, very quickly despite first time nerves and an acute sense of 'techno fear,' which was my overriding memory of that recording session. The finished article was sent to various record labels, including Crass and Bluurg (home of the Subhumans), but it was Children of the Revolution Records from Bristol, England (eventually home to the likes of Chaos UK, Sacrilege, and Concrete Sox) who liked us and saw our potential. Originally, the five songs were to be released as a 7" single, but it was decided it would do better as a 12" single. Knowing that a few thousand 7" record sleeves had already been printed, they were utilized as inserts for the 12"—don't want to waste anything, do we? Bootleggers take note: 'A By-Product of Profit Takes Effect,' Who Are They Trying to Con?..."

Who Are They Trying to Con is a powerful hardcore record that sounds modern in its total rejection of any remaining rock gimmicks in punk. At the same time, it's a product of its time, with production that lets the group loose, somehow avoiding the heavy metal clichés to which so many groups in this genre fell victim.

Released in 1985, the 12" represents the next stage of anarcho punk, lyrically, wherein groups were no longer trying to convince people of their ideas, and not trying to shock people out of their complacency. This record was made for an audience that existed and was looking for new bands to continue the struggle started with the previous generation, many of whom had now moved on.

Scott: "Again, as I've said about the first demo, our songs reflect what was going at the time. The song 'Disaster Area,' for example, was an insight into the lethal potential of nuclear power, particularly potent for us here in Scotland then, as now, with several reactors on our doorstep. As it happens, I wrote that song way before Chernobyl exploded onto our screens. That wasn't foresight on my part, just an inevitable chain of events waiting to happen. Terrifying, and still looming over us all."

While it remains an easy target for those outside of the movement, Who Are They Trying to Con became a success largely because it was one of a few records that fit a need. Concerning itself with what was happening in the anarcho hardcore scene and unaware of other pop music trends, the record was vilified by some critics, ignored by even more, while still managed to establish the band.

Scott: "Those first 'engineered tracks' on the 12" are probably our defining moment as AOA., and then as now, provoke my determination and individualism of speech. We got a good reaction to Who Are They Trying to Con, not only from the 'scene,' but even from varied music listeners, including highly respected British radio DJ John Peel — always an advocate of the underground music scene.

"Many a gig was played with these songs, and we even received offers from across the Atlantic to play. But inevitably response wasn't good from all quarters, though we didn't care about furthering steps up the punk ladder. This was no rock 'n' roll lifestyle to adhere to. Surviving on a jobless allowance, we struggled the best we could. It was our passion for change that kept us going and a no-compromise attitude that always prevailed."

It's very rare that hardcore totally translates onto vinyl. More so than any other punk genre, the records are often seen as souvenirs from the live shows. For bands like AOA, it meant that playing live as often as possible was their greatest asset.

This commitment to playing live made it easier for the group to feel like they existed outside of society. Living for the road is difficult, but once you become acclimated, it dictates enough of your life that it becomes a way of life.

A band that could understand that way of thinking was Oi Polloi. Already comrades from numerous gigs together in the area, it was inevitable that they would work together on other projects, resulting in a split LP.

Scott: "Our connection with Oi Polloi stems from way back at the initial conception of the local punk scene in Edinburgh. One of the first lineups of Oi Polloi we got to know very well—I was sharing a flat with the Oi Polloi guitarist, the respective vocalists were cohabiting, and the two bass players were of course brothers, and so it was all quite cozy! And as you know, readers, drummers are always banging on and on about things, and the possibility of percussive duets!"

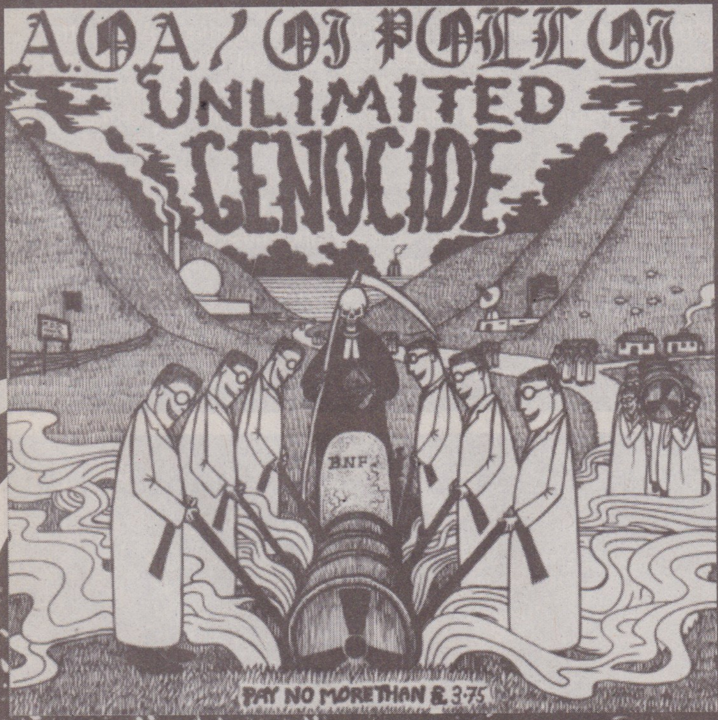
Like the previous 12", Unlimited Genocide was released on Children of the Revolution Records, and was one of many split records for Oi Polloi. It was a more invested way of showing unity between local bands than the usual compilation album route. It was also a snapshot of their local scene in 1986.

Scott: "This relationship developed and culminated in the Unlimited Genocide album, which originally I had titled Scotland the Grave. AOA had already recorded seven new songs for COR Records and Oi Polloi were looking to put some songs to vinyl, so it seemed a great idea to bring them on board for a split album. Incidentally the record reached #13 in the UK independent charts at the time. To date, we're still good friends with Deek Oi and his current lineup. Being the 20th anniversary of that specific record, there is talk of a possible reissue, Unlimited Genocide indeed. The AOA side of this split LP contains various subjects concerning us at the time, and as before, never a dull moment in the human race's ability to inflict genocide and untold suffering to other species and each other. The song 'OSA' (Official Secrets Act), for example, is my attempt to question 'What do we really know?' In other words, always question the 'official line' and its so-called facts, and ask

what you don't see and aren't being told, so-called 'Black Projects' for example. 'When will the people see it working?...when some human lives are fucked.'"

For the second release, All Out Attack became All Our Anger (also the title of one of the songs on the split). While their seven tracks are generally heading in the same direction as the previous releases, the clearer production makes some of the group's old and new influences more obvious. At this time, there was a big influx in amazing hardcore from the continent. Great bands from all over Scandinavia, Germany, and Italy were popping up and pushing the extreme noise of hardcore. Bands like Negazione seemed on the verge of exploding. At the same time, it seemed like Conflict was having a major impact on most UK hardcore, which seems especially evident on "Murder In The Wood," with its melodic guitar-picking intro in a minor key.

Scott: "The overall sound on this recording is certainly different from the 12", and for various reasons. In those days, with limited funds and unlimited imagination, it was damn near impossible to exact a copy of past efforts, be it a song structure, or sound, or both, and who would want to? We had definitely moved on since Who Are They Trying to Con, including a new drummer. We were becoming more varied and adept—or should that be inept—at plying our noise-craft. I've been told the vocals are really 'muddy' and incoherent on this recording—that's true, and there are two reasons for it: firstly, I should mention that Steven, our vocalist, had bronchitis at the time. We had already booked the studio time and couldn't postpone or forward the date so he had to do the best he could with his throat in agony—that was what we called determination and dedication to his beliefs. Secondly, our lyrics are fucking passionate, and growled to their utmost rawness, taking your voice to the limit of emotion; this isn't a part-time bandwagon, a lovely joyride you can jump on and off at will, this is All Our Anger, period.




"But for whatever reasons, it's certainly positive to make a noise and stand up for what you advocate and believe in. Making noise for noise's sake is still a fucking useless and pointless exercise in musical expression, unless you at least have a good sound and have something interesting to say! Each to their own cup of coffee, I suppose."

Despite the relative successes of both records, the band found themselves somewhat stagnant for the next year. Despite a desire to play live and many offers of overseas trips, financial realities and other complications kept the band to playing one-offs and mini-tours around Scotland and England.

Scott: "In the intervening years after Unlimited Genocide, major changes were afoot. Specifically, a new vocalist and drummer joined the fray. We also 'upped the ante' so to speak, as far as our protest was concerned, namely traveling further a field to play and convey our message to a more varied landscape. As I mentioned, we got offers to play the USA and Canada but even an offer to go to Ireland, which is practically our backyard, still seemed a distant horizon due to lack of money and disorganization. Naiveté, of course, always had its part to play. More crucially and relevant, though, I think we were of more use continuing the struggle here at home—home is where the heart is—and our protest is always 'From The Heart.'

"The integral network of DIY at that time relied on primitive correspondence by today's standards. You have to remember there were no tour managers or cozy tour buses to rely on—this was living and breathing life on the road. Our trusty van, which became our haven on the sometimes ugly and brutal streets of Britain, served us well and didn't cost too much in garage repairs. Inevitably the old van did take a pounding though and from there on in we borrowed and hired various makeshift vehicles."

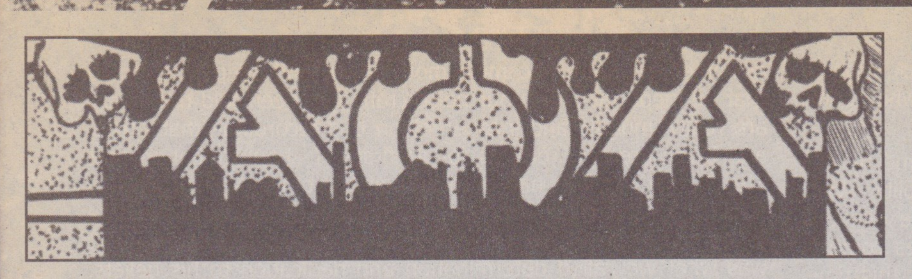
But 1986 and 1987 were difficult years for some of the bigger bands, with violence more and more associated with gigs. This violence would eventually find itself into AOA's world when they helped organize some dates for Conflict.

<u>A.LL O.UR A.NGER</u>

No, we're not talking shit/Why do you disagree?/We're fighting for the same cause/Fighting to be free/You may not like the music/The noises that we make/ But don't let that divide us/We've got to direct our hate.....

At the people in power and the scum who work for them/Against the vivisectionist who stuck the knife in/Then there's the boys in blue who are there to lock us up/ P.C. Blakelock's fuckin' dead - well tough fucking luck....

The queen is on the telly/She gave a nice wave/But even as she's standing there/ We're digging her a grave/Take no more shit/Show the bastards what we think/WE don't want their politics/Their fucking system stinks ....



Scott: "We played mainly benefit gigs at that time, and of course were only too happy to be in the thick of it for a good cause, for better or for worse. Too many gigs to mention but one in particular always sticks in my memory. We had organized two gigs in Scotland for Conflict—one in my local village hall, which got cancelled due to 'building regulations' (always excuses!), and the other in the capital city of Edinburgh. Through the years there've been various stories in circulation about what happened at this gig. A few bands were on the bill and we were the penultimate band that night, with Conflict headlining. To try to cut a long story short, there was negative tension brewing in the crowd and that in itself was nothing unusual since 'anarchist' bands did attract their fair share of Nazi punks, rednecks, and their ilk. This was unfortunately par for the course. Usually it was all bravado and easily contained if things got out of hand—tonight was different though. As AOA took to the stage and raced through our set, beer glasses were sent flying in all directions, narrowly missing yours truly by the way, but I still continued thrashing out to the crowd with one eye on my guitar, the other on what appeared to be liquid UFOs! As the night progressed the scene descended into chaos and complete disorder. The cops were in the building cracking heads with batons, missiles were not only directed at us but of course at the establishment. A riot ensued, broken bones, arrests and questions—someone could easily have been killed, but thankfully that wasn't the headline news that night.

"In the aftermath of that gig, and to this day, there are still conflicting rumors on how it all started. People always see what they want to see, and hear what they want to hear. But one thing is for certain: the rumor machine is always well oiled and maintained. The saddest thing of all, though, was that the headline act (Conflict) didn't get to play, and, like us, were very disillusioned once again with this so-called movement for unity and change. Yes, you have the usual suspects when trouble flares, but a small-town tribe mentality (and alcohol) can invoke the primitive side of an otherwise pacifist nature.

"We weren't to be defeated though, and once again, through adversity we picked up the pieces and continued on our path of world liberation (well, at least our small part of the planet)."

However, their friendship with Conflict did get them a spot on 1986's We Won't Be Your Fucking Poor double LP compilation with the track "Animal Instincts."

As is the case with most independent labels, COR Records was something of a disorganized situation. While it's impossible to fault the intentions of most of these labels, seeing as there really wasn't any money to be made, it was that very fact that made operations at times flaky.

Scott: "As it was time to leave past incidents behind and move on, so it was time to part company with Children of the Revolution Records. We found it difficult establishing a reasonable communication level dealing with record labels. Be it naiveté or ignorance, I think it worked both ways. There is always a certain level of trust in a 'handshake deal' relationship, but as the partnership becomes stale, only empty promises remain. The same could be said of Endangered Music, who in the initial stages of our friendship were very obliging and straightforward in their proposed plans for an AOA. record. Ironically enough, we first met Steve (of Endangered Music) at COR records HQ. Tim (of COR) had organized a mini-tour for us, encompassing COR's local squat venue called the Demolition Diner/Ballroom. At that point we didn't have a drummer so Steve offered to play drums for us at that venue. He did a great job that night, considering he only had a couple of hours beforehand to learn an AOA set. We were to deal with him again a few years later when he released our album Satisfactory Arrangement so time and priorities had moved on. When everything hinges on trust and respect, you have to rely on each other. By their very nature, humans make mistakes and therefore will become endangered...and so it is a Satisfactory Arrangement—yep, it's all in the name."

After a year with no releases, AOA. was back in 1988 with their one full length LP, Satisfactory Arrangement. Again, the group still played raw, non-metal hardcore, but the arrangements were getting more complicated and they were learning more studio techniques to help translate the power of live performances onto vinyl.

Scott: "This was the next step in AOA's progression, and this album was definitely the most thought-through and experimental record to date. Lyrically and musically, things were becoming more diverse as inevitably we as individuals tasted different things musically or otherwise. There is an acoustic guitar and a keyboard on that record somewhere! There was certainly more emphasis on our passionate cause for animal rights. Both images and words were utilized to good effect on this recording.

The front cover and additional artwork came courtesy of another human friend, and the back cover showed actual photographs of animal experiments. This wasn't for shock value—rather, its aim was to show the reality of what we do as humans in shocking detail. Did it work? It wasn't all down to a specific band or record sleeve but certainly we saw more of an overall inclination to related topics concerning the rights of animals, which in essence was always going to be an important moral and ethical issue in the anarchist punk philosophy."

There is a clear difference between this record and the previous releases. First of all, the vocals are much more prominent and less hidden in effects or buried in the mix. Reminiscent of early Conflict, the vocals give the music a lot of energy. More complex arrangements help showcase how tight the band was, as well as some of their musical chops. While other bands slow down with each progressing release, it seems like AOA are actually faster on this record than on previous releases.

"Get To Fuck Out" and "No One Is Laughing" are especially effective during the spoken word segments where accents aren't masked by shouting. It's an angry record, but in a new voice, making AOA a unique event.

The lyrical content covers a broad number of topics, from contemporary English colonialism to environmental concerns.

Scott: "Another subject that is very important to me as a songwriter is evolution, which I tried to convey in the song "Paradise Lost." Basically, in geological time humans have only been on this planet an instant, but in their short rise to their so-called ascendancy they have become the rapists and potential eradicators of all life on this age-old earth. We are a fucking virus in nature, nothing more, nothing less, but one hopes there's a glimmer of hope if we begin to understand not just the natural world but crucially ourselves—respect or die."

Not long after the release of this album, singer Steven decided to split the group. Rather than look for a new singer, they continued on as a trio.

Scott: "The '90s and a new decade: we had recently once again been through a few lineup changes. We booked one last foray into the recording studio, and at that stage in the proceedings I was not only writing and playing guitar but took on the ominous job of lead vocals. This was always going to be a natural progression, not just for me, personally, but for the band as a whole. We always tried to look forward and utilize what experience we had gained through playing music and living life, and so it was to be we evolved and recorded something 'a bit different.' These news songs, collectively known as All Out Attack, were never released fully to a wider audience. The plan at the time was to self-finance this release on my own label, All Out Audio, but due to practical circumstances this was put on ice till the time was right. I certainly do feel that what I was writing about all those years ago is still relevant, so it may well be time for another 'All Out Attack.' But also I think there was a lot of disillusionment in the punk scene back then, and as is usual with a new decade dawning, a lot of people were re-evaluating their position and moving on to other forms of expression, be it other forms of music or other philosophies. I think we as a band of individuals were of course going to follow our natural progressions—it's human nature to explore and evolve, but to what end, who knows? History tells us that as well as natural selection there's mutation and that's a fascinating, yet scary thought! All going well?"

With the growing disillusionment with the punk scene and the uncertainty of when or how they would get these new recordings released, the band split up.

Scott: "In 1990, shortly after recording All Out Attack, the band decided to call it a day and move on to other things. So here we are again full circle, sentiments still ringing true. We will always question the cause and effect of humanity's place on the planet and act accordingly."

After some five plus years of struggle, the group split, becoming one of the more overlooked groups of the time. With their vinyl as difficult to find as most cassettes, AOA seem destined to become a future cult band, with their records becoming more and more sought after.

Scott: "In reflection on AOA's history: basically, we were a tribe of individuals who took a stance against what we saw and felt was the manipulation and total disregard of our liberties. We heard all the 'moaners and the career punks,' the never-ending chants of their so called anti-establishment music—it was and still is the easy option to sit back and moan about how life's unfair and how society is to blame, rather than be true to your beliefs and, more crucially, do something positive about it. It takes a bit of effort to change and evolve, and sometimes it becomes all too clear who the real enemy is. We decided to vent our anger through playing in a band and taking a more direct approach and action with our protest. For the most part it had the desired effect: an All Out Attack on what we wanted to change.

"As for the so called 'anarcho punk' movement (yet another label) then as now, we mostly all have a very deep sense of camaraderie and respect for each other. Egos sometimes get in the way, but that again is par for the course and curse of being in the limelight—'all the world's a stage,' someone once said. I think the death knell for any underground movement is the adherence to and worship of self-appointed leaders within. Certain bands are put on pedestals because they seem to be at the forefront of the action, not everybody swarms around the termite mound, it's a collective not a hierarchy. This is the paradox: Anarchist punk was about individualism, but that individualism has become just another genre: 'anarcho punk.' As Crass once said, 'punk became a fashion like hippy used to be.' Now, 25 years after AOA began, it seems anarcho punk is the fashionable foray into a novel nostalgia. Throughout history and certainly through musical ideals there's always a danger of becoming the very thing you set out not to be— there are no set rules but your own. Yes, we should respect our peers, but never follow without question. Of course I could be completely wrong and that's the beauty of it—it's an individual's expression, my own thoughts.

"Communication and knowledge have always been the key, so use them. Your own ideas and insight are the most important doors you can open. Involve—resolve—evolve."

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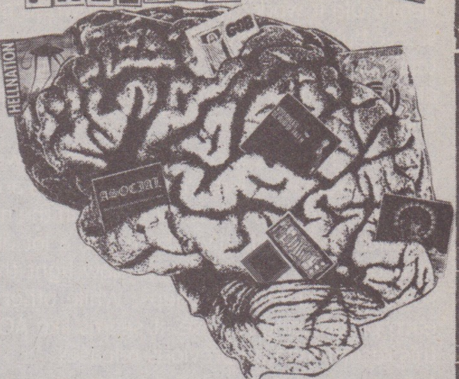


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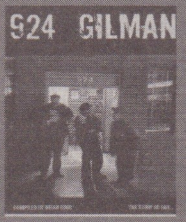
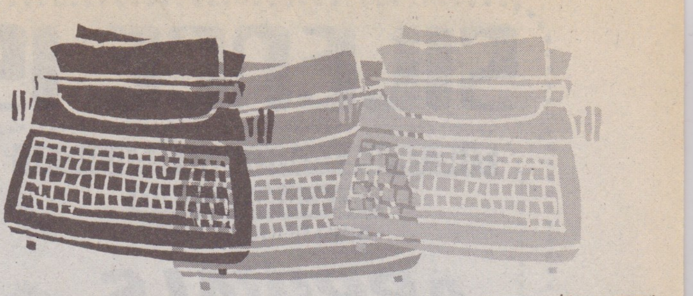
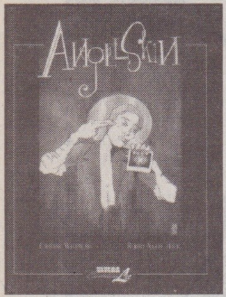



"There is a theme that runs through punk rock about fighting a revolution. Anger and aggression are just as much a part of the scene as the music is, but sometimes I wonder what we are fighting against when we just keep fighting each other. This includes the internal schism between the roles of men and women in the scene. There is this girl who used to hang around here and at almost every show someone would grab her tits. I watched her stand up for herself after getting physically torn down and rarely did anyone stand up with her. This consistent degradation denied her the right to fully contribute what she could to the community she wanted to be a part of. Hate to sound like an idealist, but I did not get involved in Gilman to get beat down or beat up. I came here because I love the music and saw the potential of what can happen with it."
-- Rachel S. '00 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)

# BOOKS






***Angel Skin***
**Written by Christian Westerland**
**Artwork by Robert Nazeby Herzig**
**80 pages • $11.95**
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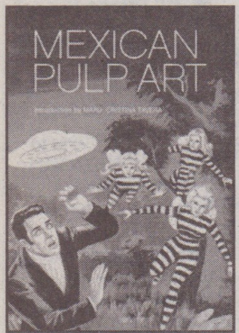
The beginning of this comic is extremely bleak. I almost didn't want to continue because it is exceptionally depressing (particularly if, like me, you aren't the most stable person to start with). I'm really glad I did though. The entire work maintains a horribly dingy feel, but when the plot kicks in you are simply moving with it, instead of forcibly experiencing Joshua Baker's suicide.

The movement of Angel Skin, which follows an afterlife of sorts, is aided by the fact that Herzig's art is varied, giving different sections distinct personalities. A dirty, painted look reminiscent of some Ben Templesmith art gives way to clean lines with a Dean Ormstron/Alberto Dose influence and vice versa. It all looks amazing, which might be a result of Herzig doing all of the work himself. Involving someone else with the inks or coloring would have definitely affected the overall quality.

Looking past the art (which I would have to say is the strong suit here), the plot is dark and strange. The characters sometimes flit in and out without much explanation, but with a ton of symbolic overtones. God exists in this afterlife, albeit as a possibly dying and bored old man. The dead roam the streets of this fucked up city with no end in sight. It appears the only difference from their previously miserable lives is that they no longer sleep. Some find this torturous, while others seem completely unaffected. Although I don't get the feeling that this is meant to be a horror comic, it still has quite a profound effect, given some of the denizens found within. The constantly gasmask-clad prostitute is particularly chilling, especially when she blatantly coos, "I need you inside of me." She is so creepy that the juxtaposition of sex and gloom is simply disturbing.

I can't say much for the plot itself—it seems to suggest that some things are occurring in the world of the living as well as the heaven/hell hybrid, but that is never really explicit. The same goes for the ending—it's pretty open to interpretation I think, but lacks a solid climax. There are some very clever plays on expectations, but the ending also has threads dangling that make me feel as if I missed something. I did enjoy Angel Skin, but more for the format it's exercising than for the story it tells. A strange, medium-length trip into someone else's despair would be a good way to sum it up. And for fuck's sake, did Josh's tombstone have to include the same year I was born? That's always creepy to me.

—Joe Soares




***Mexican Pulp Art***
**140 pages • $16.00**
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**Los Angeles, CA 90039**
**www.feralhouse.com**

In the 1960s America saw the rise of the erotic pulp paperback. The simple object In the 1960s America saw the rise of the erotic pulp paperback. The simple object of the covers of these books was to bait the potential buyer with the promise of sex. The more lurid the cover was, the more likely a book would be purchased. The marketing plan worked to perfection and millions of books were sold. Close to the same time a similar strain of book was being released in Mexico, and the covers were designed in a similar manner, to entice purchase. The difference between the marketing in America and Mexico was vast. In the States, they peddled softcore porn and prurient interests on the covers of their pulps, while Mexico went for the straight up bizarre. Mexican Pulp Art is a celebration of the art that graced covers of various paperbacks that were released south of the US border.

Maria Cristina Tavera pens the introduction to this collection. Tavera relates how the covers were used to tempt the purchaser, and with 30 million pulps being pumped out monthly, competition was tough. The introduction is brief but revealing, telling of the different types of pulp titles that were produced in Mexico and how they were marketed to the public. She also recounts the assembly of the books and the creative teams behind them, and the relationship of themes covered within to the Mexican way of life. After the introduction we get to the meat of the book, and that is the vibrant, full-page reproductions of the cover art.

Mexican pulp covers celebrate sex as much as their American counterparts, but they also throw in violence, sci-fi weirdness, lucha libre, psychedelia, murder, and crime. The covers that are collected in Mexican Pulp Art are from the '60s and '70s and all of them were released by defunct publisher, Editorial Continental. The artwork reproduced in Mexican Pulp Art is from the personal collections of two individuals, Bobbette Axelrod and Ted Frankel.

The content is vivid, colorful and downright weird at some points. As Maria Cristina Tavera states in her introduction, "the fantasy elements reflect Mexican attitudes about life, death, mysticism, and the supernatural." Some of the highlights: A gorilla breaking through a door to assault a man, giant ants attacking men, fighting invisible men, a fire starter, scenes of murder, suicide and mayhem, ghosts, corpses, the supernatural, gun-toting children, sexpot women, aliens and much more. As the introduction states, the pulp covers blur the line between the mundane and the fantastic.

I have a soft spot for all things from Mexico. This is probably the result of an active imagination as a child. When I was growing up I was told of how, in a past life, I lived in Mexico. My story was that I was a toothless mute who pumped gas on a dirt airfield somewhere in Mexico. Ever since then I have immersed myself in Mexican culture, this book adds to my collection of Mexican art and also to the knowledge of a culture and history that is usually unfairly ignored in most of the United States. Mexican Pulp Art documents a forgotten art form and belongs on the coffee table or bookshelf of anyone that appreciates fantastic art.

—Trent Reinsmith

***Fomido e Xerocado: Por Favor, Olhe Para Mim!***
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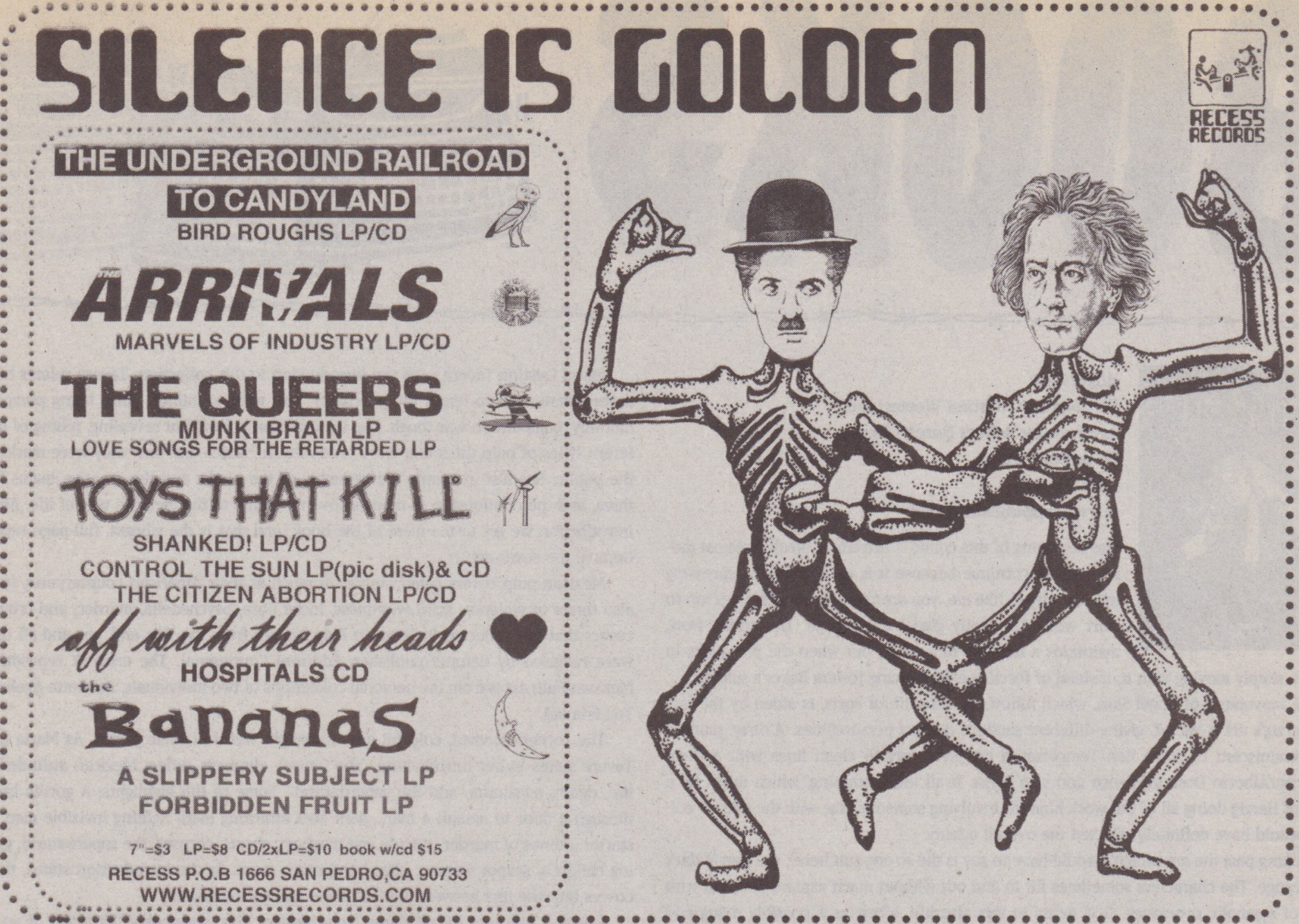
This photo book is an inspiring piece of work at a time when it seems like there are very few awesome photographers documenting the fact that the worldwide punk scene is rife with excellent, exciting bands. Daigo Oliva and Mateus Mondini are two talented Brazilian photographers with that rare ability to not only document, but add even more life to the action they capture on film. Fodido e Xerocado is a compilation of the best photographs from the first three issues of their great but hard-to-find photozine of the same name, and also includes previously unpublished color shots. This book is packed with recent live photos of bands from all over the world, old and new, famous and barely known, with a notable emphasis on the Brazilian scene. It doesn't matter whether or not you are interested in the bands that are included here, such as Brazil's O Inimigo, Cinder, BUSH; international acts like Argentina's Boom Boom Kid and Portland's Clorox Girls (a particular favorite of theirs); or aging punk stars Iggy Pop, Duane Peters, and The Rezillos—the joy of, and enthusiasm for, punk rock is what grabs you on every page of this truly exciting volume. The liner notes, which come as a separate page in English, are also inspiring despite the awkward translation (you can read them on the website listed above). Fodido e Xerocado will be placed proudly on my bookshelf alongside other historic photo collections like Hardcore California and My Rules.

—Paul Curran



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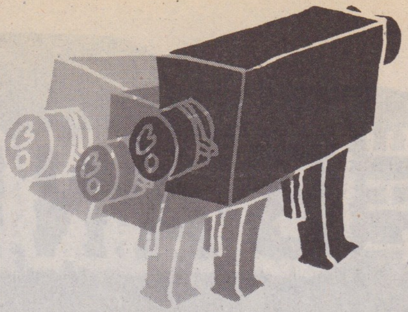
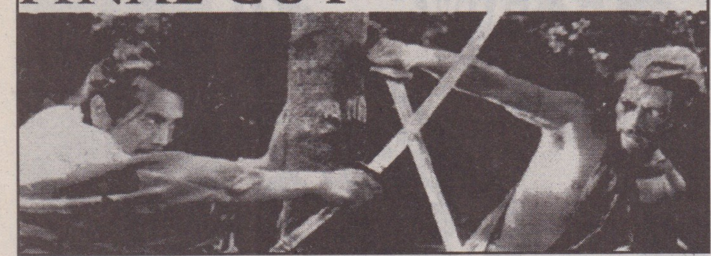
# MOVIES



## FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



### GRANDMASTERS OF PONG

It's part of what makes America kind of great: that so many would dedicate their time not to selfless public service, but the pursuit of happiness through video games. **The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters** is an amiable documentary by Seth Gordon, who's primarily been involved in short subjects. This film shows the pursuit of happiness in a way that might trouble a Founding Father. If it weren't for a shared cultural memory of games like Pong, Pacman, Mario Brothers, and their kin, much of the drama might have proved hard to believe.

Seth Gordon spends a small amount of time with introductory material—just enough to provide a context for the proliferation of video games in the mid-'70s. Pacman, Mario Brothers, Tron, and so many others once occupied the same time/space continuum as pinball machines. The film's short introductory section still leaves you amazed at how quickly a new technology took control of the gaming world. For some, it took over *their* entire world.

Multiple game champion Billy Mitchell is good evidence of this—a bigger-than-life by-product of the times—and the first winner of a "perfect game" in Donkey Kong. Wiry, with long black hair that falls to his shoulders, his fame has long been secured by a series of untouchable records in several of the major games; some even dubbed him video game player of the century (whatever that's worth). He's not bashful at using every device possible to push his dubious greatness: he has a good-looking wife, the absolute respect of compliant "officials," and a kind of *noblisse oblige* reserved for royalty. He also has his own sauce line (unlike Paul Newman, 100% of Mitchell's proceeds go to profit).

In fact, there are times when Mitchell comes off as almost demonic. This partly stems from director Gordon's needs to fashion a bad guy, but Billy Mitchell doesn't put up much resistance. Compare Mitchell to amiable family man and fellow gamer Steve Wiebe—rumor has it that he has actually beaten Mitchell's records fair and square. By the account of Nicole Wiebe, her husband's life was almost the reverse of Billy Mitchell's. Steve Weibe wandered through his early married-life without a goal (or, much of the time, a steady job). Oddly and unpredictably, the turning point came when he purchased a Donkey Kong game, and installed the console in his garage. Unburdened by the continual need for quarters, he played as if possessed. By Nicole Weibe's account, it was one of those things a guy has to do. During one amusing moment, recorded on tape, Weibe is on his way to breaking the unofficial record—even as a rug-rat screams for attention in the background.

Several players recount the hellish difficulties of the game— a grinding series of screens requiring split-second reactions; an occasional randomness that could fell even the best players. Endurance proves to be the final test for most veterans; most decent games may last several hours.

Steve Weibe's record might very well have been accepted into the record books—except for Billy Mitchell's reference to yet another record, captured on dodgy videotape. Suddenly, Weibe's record is thrown into darkness. His only way of proving his abilities is to do it live, on a verified machine, before other Donkey Kong aficionados. That means making a pilgrimage across the country to Walter Day in Hollywood, Florida.

That's also the hope of TwinGalaxies, the official certifier of video game records. It's full-time work in itself, since dozens of tapes arrive in the mail every week, each several hours long. Every manner of game needs to be evaluated, and verified records appear in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Walter Day takes his job so seriously that he probably sleeps in his referee's stripes.

When Weibe finally makes his way to Hollywood, Florida, it's like moving back in time. TwinGalaxies headquarters is a valley of gaming consoles—and a heaven for nostalgiacs. Almost from the start, Weibe begins to accumulate exceptional scores (often while having conversations with visitors or dignitaries). When a record is close to being broken, Walter Day wanders through the walls, announcing the feat to a fraternity of fellow gamers who materialize from other regions of the hall. Gaming is so incessant that Walter Day must announce a "last call"; otherwise, diehard players might be tempted to sit at the consoles all night.

Director Seth Gordon doesn't shy away from the notion that the whole business may be more than a little silly, but the accomplishment of meeting or exceeding these records doesn't seem to change over time; in fact, it seems that a new generation of players is emerging to match the obscure records of the '70s and '80s. It's all a part of what makes **The King of Kong** so fascinating and bizarre.

Some will always regard game records as being inherently silly, but filmmakers Loise Osmand and Jerry Rothwell may change your mind with their new documentary **Deep Water**. But here, we have to move back to 1966, where we're shown a more serious type of gaming. In Britain, the *Sunday Times Golden Globe* sponsors a more extreme contest—a non-stop, solo boat race around the world. Beginning in England, six daring mariners would attempt to sail to the Mediterranean, around the Indian Ocean, through the Pacific and Cape Horn, back home again—a crushing, solitary achievement. Magellan achieved the journey (going the opposite direction), and died in the middle of the second voyage. The *Sunday Times* set the ante for the winning time at £50,000.

The intimate group of competitors set sail the year after Sir Francis Chichester captured the record only a year before. But a few daredevils seemed to feel they had he edge. Individualist Bernard Moitessier is a man of few words whom actually seems to prefer the company of the sea. (Not that his wife has any say in the matter.) For him, sailing is the kind of thing that makes human love seem like an afterthought. Later, he achieved international acclaim through a series of books on sailing.

The real story, however, is somewhat darker. Donald Crowhurst, a British engineer, has been toying with radical changes in sea craft. He observed that, instead of a typical vessel, a two-winged design might be able to manage long voyages more efficiently. His sober, optimistic predictions captured the interest of the British press—even as investors seemed less than excited in supporting a relatively less experienced sailor. All the other boats have now already set sail. Finally, however, he's able to get the

crucial support from a financier, but on one condition: he *had* to win. No "gentleman's" agreement—these words were drafted in a lawyer's office.

Crowhurst gave a number of interviews prior to the race, and they reveal a divided personality. The television camera shows prototypically reserved British intellectual—a smart and confident man completely self-assured in his abilities. However, as we later discover, he was only an amateur racer, and his design was basically untried and under-funded. A second look shows a divided personality—a shuffling gait and crow's feet around his eyes suggest an uncertainty. Despite this, he moves forward almost as if fated to participate in a devilishly challenging race only a handful of men would dare attempt. As fate would have it, half of the field gave up after only a few months.

Interviews with Claire Crowhurst and son Simon tell of a family burdened by debt and a last-ditch attempt at reversing fortunes. Claire wonders, and cries that she might have done more to dissuade her husband. After seeing the reconstruction of the race based on racing logs, diaries, and interviews, one can only imagine the worry and madness begat by a simple boat race. Tilda Swinton narrates the story, but the tale is so engrossing that her words are soaked into the fabric of the narrative.

## BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

### OI! WHERE'S YOUR BEN SHERMAN?

Everyone talks about fitting in when you are a kid—you are made fun of for not having the right clothes, because your family is poor, or your parents divorced. Kids' worlds are very small, so the constant torment from others at school usually creates a dour outlook on life. Twelve-year-old Shaun—the protagonist of the film **This Is England**—has lost his father in the Falklands War. The Mod boys at school make fun of his clothes, which Shaun easily brushes off with a similar insult, but when one of them, Harvey, starts to say something about his dad, Shaun freaks out and attempts to beat the kid up. Shaun's sensitivity toward the subject of his father plays a big part of his indoctrination as a skinhead.

**This Is England** opens with a montage of images of the '80s: Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, the Diana/Charles wedding, Duran Duran, council flats, war, etc., set to the Toots and The Maytals song "54-46 Was My Number." The images are sure to conjure up some sort of recognition and/or memory in the viewer's mind. This simple opening sets the tone for the many contradictions experienced in the film.

After Shaun's fight at school, he is walking home and comes across a group of skinheads hanging out under an overpass. One of the skins, Woody, asks Shaun what's the matter, but he tells the group to fuck off. After a bit of coaxing, he recounts his fight with Harvey. Immediately Woody starts making fun of Harvey's name, bringing a smile to Shaun's face. One of the others, Gadget, tries to exert his authority by telling Shaun to move from his place. Woody has already taken a liking to Shaun so he stands up for him.

The next day, Gadget shows up at Shaun's house dressed in a ridiculous outfit, part Scottish warrior and part housewife. They meet up with the rest of the gang who are dressed equally as silly and go off to an abandoned house to smash things up. Some may view it as an unhealthy need to destroy, but the outfits create a sense of typical childhood play. Sometimes people need to get their aggression out. It's better than beating up people. The group mostly hangs out drinking beer and listening to music. The whole scene is seemingly innocent.

Shaun is accepted as one the skins. His mother agrees to buy him some boots. He wants Dr. Martens, but they don't come in his size. He throws a bit of a tantrum as his mother and the saleswoman try to convince him to buy some other boots that are just in from London. It is refreshing to see Shaun's mother portrayed as a caring and responsible person. Too many of these troubled teenage kid movies have absent parents. When Shaun comes home with his head shaved and in full skinhead outfit, she immediately drags him down to where his friends are hanging out to talk to them about his hair. She also knows all about Woody and the others, so obviously, Shaun tells her about what he is doing. Also at the end, when the racism comes to a brutal climax, Shaun's mother is there to comfort him.

When Combo returns from jail, the balance in the seemingly happy-go-lucky group changes. Combo went to jail for something he did with Woody. He didn't turn Woody in so he never got caught. Therefore Woody feels a sense of loyalty to Combo and tries to welcome him back into the group. However, Combo's racism and attempts to recruit everyone for the National Front splits them up. Combo uses Shaun's main weakness, his anger over the death father, to get him to turn his back on Woody and remain with the racist skins.

The story is based on director Shane Meadows' own experience as a skinhead in the '80s. **This Is England** looks at the English skinheads with a nostalgic and unusually honest viewpoint. It is easy to see why everyone does what he/she does in the film. Combo may be racist, but he's had a hard life. He just got out of jail, he can't get a job, so he blames his problems on immigrants. He's in love with Woody's girlfriend Lol, but she bluntly tells him that the night they spent together was the worst night of her life. His family life is horrible. Even with all his problems, it is still impossible to understand why he takes all his aggression out on the only people that seem like they would be his friends. (www.thisisenglandmovie.co.uk)

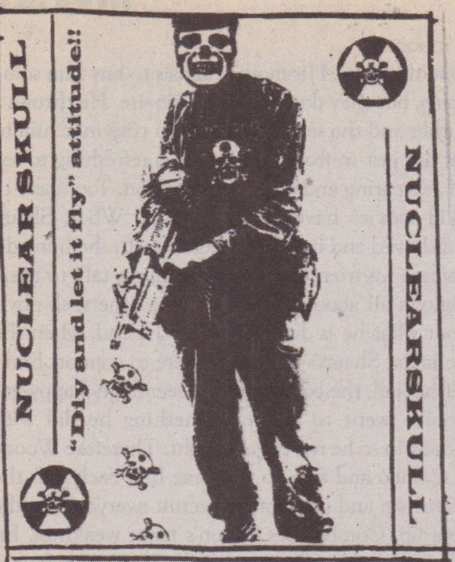
As if you need another reason to despise Ronald Reagan, **Who Killed The Electric Car?** offers a seemingly off-handed remark that when Reagan became president he had the solar panels removed from the roof of the White House. Why would anyone do such an idiotic thing? Oh yeah, it was Reagan, and Jimmy Carter was the one who had them installed.

**Who Killed The Electric Car?** takes a look at the short-lived electric car made by GM in 1996. The car was supposedly easy to recharge and the battery lasted for 100 miles per charge. It was easy to maintain and very quiet. GM spent all this time developing the car and hired a group of college students to market the car. Celebrities drove them and talked about them on TV talk shows, yet the car never really made it to the average person. Instead of making more, GM decided to destroy all the ones on the road.

So why did GM stop making and destroy these cars? **Who Killed The Electric Car?** looks at many factors, including car companies, oil companies, and politicians who chose to support ending the electric car. The film makes the car look very appealing, yet I recall hearing only negative things about the electric car. Celebrities like Ed Begley Jr. drove one. Not exactly the people whose opinions I trust when I am thinking of making an extravagant purchase.

It is pretty well known that most Americans are obsessed with their cars. How else would oil and gas companies be able to use the threat of terrorism to steeply increase gas prices in order to make obscene profits? **Who Killed The Electric Car?** makes a great case for an industry that is too concerned with current profits to look ahead to ending dependency on foreign oil, protecting the air, and even helping out ordinary people. Plus, all the politicians are too worried about getting re-elected to do anything worthwhile, though seeing celebrities holding vigils outside GM to demand the release of the cars is a bit creepy too. (www.whokilledtheelectriccar.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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# RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the *vinyl*) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA.** We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(BS) Brian Stern
(SW) Shane White

**7 SECONDS – "Dedicated to Hardcore" EP**

7 SECONDS is mainly known for their dismally produced landmark debut LP *The Crew* and its follow-up *Walk Together Rock Together*, but both of these easy-to-find records capture a band past its prime. That's right—you might not have suspected it, but 7 SECONDS was, at one time, a raging hardcore band, one of the better American bands of the early '80s. For evidence, see their pre-*The Crew* 1983 recording, released as *Old School* in the late '90s. Unfortunately, however, this bootleg (done by, I suspect, the same folks who did the BLACK FLAG *Licorice Pizza* boot last year) documents the band before they really hit their stride. Sure, it's kinda interesting to hear 7 SECONDS before they started playing fast, but it won't really get your blood flowing... At least this bootleg looks cool, and is chock-full of info, including an old interview from *Touch & Go* fanzine. (CS)
(bootleg, no address)

**999 – "Death in Soho" CD**

I was listening to the first 999 LP before coming down to the MRR compound today...they were awesome, the perfect blend of new wave swagger and punk rock. I haven't heard a thing from them in years, mercifully, as it's rare that a band can impress some 30 years after their first album. This new stuff isn't necessarily bad, it's just nothing on the old stuff. Even though it's mostly original members with the geezer from THE LURKERS, this just doesn't really sound like 999. Nick Cash's vocals don't have that annoying whine that made them so special... Sure, there are a couple of shining moments like "99 Days," and the production is fantastic...it just doesn't stand out like "Homicide" or "Emergency." (TB)
(Overground, PO Box 1NW, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1NW, UNITED KINGDOM)

**AGATHOCLES / ARCHAGATHUS – split EP**

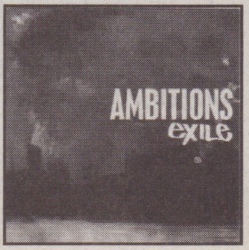
Do you know anyone else who's really into AGATHOCLES? I don't. They have a million releases yet I don't know of any fans. I'm one and have been for 15 years or so but even I realize nobody needs 250 7"s from a single band. You know already if you really want this split and there are probably 20 more AGATHOCLES splits on the way before 2007 is finished. These AGATHOCLES tracks were recorded in 1995 and are—surprise—quick raw grindcore. There is one other thing I have to say about this batch of songs—is that a posi-grindcore track? Well, not really, but "Bastard Breed We Don't Need" ends with, "Stop hating each other, for once try to bother / Stop this bastard breed, unity is what we need, now!" ARCHAGATHUS also plays a mincing grindcore that's bit heavier with wet, guttural vocals. But hey, since I'm on a lyrics kick, their opening track growls, "Hey AGATHOCLES, hey AGATHOCLES what do you say? / We wanna do a split with you today / We like to mince we like to grind / We hope our demo will blow your mind." (MH)
($5 ppd US/$9 ppd world: Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**ALIVE AT LAST / SUPREME COMMANDER – split CD**

Both of these bands totally bring me back to when I was living on the East Coast in the late '80s and early '90s. Since fast hardcore with a punk attitude was practically extinct, at least within the scene that I knew, we all were into the metallic type of stuff with lyrics that leaned more towards the, "You need to stand up for who you are" attitude than towards the political. The music was pretty good, especially when you went to shows and the crowd would go crazy, but most of the stuff hasn't held up too well over time. Washington, DC's SUPREME COMMANDER fully captures the sound and feeling of that time with six tracks that are reminiscent of TOKEN ENTRY or even the STRAW DOGS. My favorite track here is "Your Turn," which predicts the karmic revenge coming to them when the people rise up. ALIVE AT LAST from New Jersey has a bit more of the late-'80s melodic hardcore style with a metallic persuasion, like maybe BATTERY or BANE, but maybe not as fast. While listening to this I keep thinking of those Dan O'Mahoney bands like CARRY NATION or 411—you know, the ones that were cool, but not as good as NO FOR AN ANSWER. As expected, the lyrics pretty much reside along the personal, but the music is full of good power chord breakdowns and shouted choruses. Worth checking out if you dig this style of hardcore. (BG)
(Bishop19, 1218 Treasure Ave, Manahawkin, NJ 08050)

**AMBITIONS – "Exile" EP**

This is horrible music played by kids weaned on



MTV2 and BANE. Just when you think a shining glimmer of hardcore is about to break wide open, the vocalist comes in and stomps it out with his dreadful singing. Bridge 9 dropped the ball on this one. (CC)
(Bridge 9, www.bridge9.com)

**AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER – "Modern Advice" EP**

Holy shit this rules! It's crazy how this record went from what I assumed would be lame to being a definite entry to my top ten of the year list in just one listen! From the outset, you'd guess that this is just a funny thrash band that doesn't take things seriously, and in some ways they don't, but fuck me if these aren't some of the best punk songs I've heard in a long time. I could name some musical influences, like NEOS or SEIGE, but that would only be half of it, as they embrace a dose of farce with their punk rock as well. AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER has a fantastic sense of absurdity, nihilism, and sarcasm within the lyrics, and sometimes the songs are done from the third person like DEAD KENNEDYS or the DICKS used to do so well. I think this is their second EP, which means I gotta track down the other one. Check this out, you won't be disappointed. (BG)
(Rock Bottom, 25510 East Comfort Dr, Forest Lake, MN 55025)

**AMPERE / RINGERS – split 6"**

I thought this was going to be another Aaron Cometbus project, but alas—he just did the artwork… AMPERE plays what I used to think of as screamo in the bad old days. Noisy, discordant hardcore—bad medicine. Lucky it wasn't on for long. RINGERS play melodic punk with an old-school UK feel—not spikes and leather or Oi, more CLASH circa 1978/1979. I liked their album and this is more of the same; I might even give this the rare praise of using a BELTONES comparison… (AD)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

**ANGRY FOR LIFE / DUN BEEN HAD – split EP**

ANGRY FOR LIFE plays good old school sounding punk that manages to avoid posturing and clichés. They almost sound European to me. This is good stuff—plenty of hooks and a good, solid sound. DUN BEEN HAD is faster and trashier, and throws in some ska influence, a la LEFTOVER CRACK. Not my cup of tea, but this is worth hearing for the AFL side. (AD)
(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158)

**ANOTHER SINKING SHIP – "Works Well in a Crowded Area" EP**

A sort of hybrid heavy rock/emo-punk/melodic hardcore record that suffers just a *little* too much from style-over-substance syndrome. The artwork is cool but feels too much like a computer layout; the songs are energetic, well played, and well recorded but lack substance; the lyrics are right-on politically but pretty generic. It teeters on the edge of being really good and not so good so I don't wanna be too harsh, but this just didn't do it for me. Others may appreciate this band's emotive sincerity and heavy, tuneful-but-driving sound. (PC)
(Another Sinking Ship, Mustanlahdenkatu 24 A 7, 331000 Tampere, FINLAND)

**ANTHRAX – "One Last Drop" CD**

Finally—a collection of one of the finest of the early '80s UK anarcho bands. This gathers both their demos, both their EPs (on Small Wonder and Crass), and the tracks that appeared on a couple of Mortarhate comps. All the (rather incredible) artwork is reproduced, along with some lyrics. But, tragically, there's no liner notes. Regardless, it's great to have this material out again and available. Hailing from London, ANTHRAX, along with CONFLICT (and CRASS, of course), pioneered that angry, tuneful, semi-shouty London-accented vocal style, coupled with a fast, melodic, punk attack. Musically, this is very similar to early (pre-thrash/feedback) CONFLICT. Really quite wonderful they were. And definitely the ANTHRAX of choice. 18 tracks of pure genius. (RK)
(www.anthraxukoffical.com)

**APESHIT / TIGERSHARK – split LP**

It didn't take long for TIGERSHARK to grab my ear—heavy hardcore that has plenty of rock 'n' roll sounds and doesn't venture into metal but is still heavy enough to steamroll right over you. They remind me a little of AKIMBO. APESHIT and TIGESHARK are like night and day in the way they sound. APESHIT's songs are shorter, more chaotic, but not as heavy. I've always had a soft spot for short, fast hardcore tracks and APESHIT squeezes twelve of them on their side of the 12". Definitely a '90s emo sound when emo bands were still heavy and chaotic and didn't sing about girls all the time. Think MOHINDER and Gravity Records. From NYC and former members of KILARA. (MH)
(MolSook, no address)

**THE ARRIVALS – "Marvels of Industry" LP**

This is the third long-player from Chicago's indie-loving punks. A bigger, brighter production on their new Recess Records release, maybe just enough to elevate them quite deservedly into the bigger lights and bigger paychecks. This album takes on some of the greater pop moments of the PIXIES, the driving hooks of DILLINGER FOUR, a liberal sprinkling of the quirky rock movements of CHEAP TRICK, and a steady helping of all those ol' classic Windy City punk greats. The songwriting, musically and lyrically, is way beyond their years; they are never intimidated into staying within the confined punk-rock camp, making THE ARRIVALS one of the very few unique bands in a scene full of clones. (SD)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, www.recesssrecords.com)

**ASSHOLE PARADE – "Embers" LP**

This rips! Are these guys grandfathers yet? Fastcore, thrash, fast hardcore—whatever you want to call it it's fast. One day we'll look back and remember ASSHOLE PARADE as one of the great hardcore bands of their time. This is the LP version of a CD that came out at the end of 2006 and was the band's first full length since 1999. I've always wondered though—why Gainesville? (MH)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

**AT HALF MAST – "Alive, Alone, and Waiting" CD**

Okay, the label lists CHAIN OF STRENGTH as one of many references and makes the claim, "I don't recall the last time I heard fresher and more interesting HC than this" in their description of this South Carolina band. Maybe they have *heard* that band, but WTF? These songs are slow chug! Maybe the dude who wrote that has never heard music. Who knows? This is exactly like every other posi band whether they be amazing-core or not. Apparently all the members of this band are between 15 and 18, and it shows. The chops just aren't there and the songs are really loose. AARRRRGGGHHH! (JU)
(Goodwill, CP 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY, www.goodwillrecords.net)

**AUTOMATIC 7 – "At Funeral Speed" CD**

I used to love these guys. Over the last decade or so, this is only the third record they've produced. The first, way back when, was a gem of melodic hardcore, chiming guitars, layered harmonies...y'know, doing the SoCal thing well. The second really slowed it down, and seemed to be a band going through serious disintegration. Well, seven years later, they've picked up the pieces. Still slow/down/melancholy, but grooving on a more rock SOCIAL DISTORTION/later CLASH thing. Personally, I much preferred the earlier incarnation, but I understand that this is, apparently, the "modern" sound these days.

They do it well. I just wish they were young again. (RK)
(Mental, www.mentalrecords.net)

**THE AUTOMATIC ERASERS – "Make it Right/On the Road"**

I sometimes find Arizona punk to be a bit on the odd side, much the same way that punk from Florida can be that way. (Maybe it's the heat.) While that's probably a very interesting observation on my part, I'm not sure that it's terribly relevant for this record. Or is it? Side A is a pretty straightforward garage/hardcore number, and done very well. On the other hand, side B, while still garage/hardcore, also incorporates a funky bluesy sound and even a sort of industrial-ness. A nice effort. (KK)
(I Don't Feel a Thing, myspace.com/idontfeelathing)

**AUTONOMADIC – "The Missionary" CDEP**

AUTONOMADIC's music sounds something like a cross between RANCID, FIFTEEN, and SCREECHING WEASEL. So that's either good or bad depending on how you feel about those bands. For me, that means I'm much more into a song like "Sickness," a slow, WEASEL-esque melodic anthem, than the title track, which could easily be mistaken for a straight-up RANCID cover. AUTONOMADIC writes good political and socially conscious lyrics, so they seem to have their hearts in the right place. They start to find their own voice on "Lemonade," the catchiest, funniest, and least affected track here. And the last song would be great if weren't for the singer's weird pronunciation of words like "sand" as "seeaound"—what's up with that? (PC)
(Bleeding Ear, www.autonomadic.com)

**BAD DIRTY HATE – "100%" EP**

Scathing, blasting, ripping, searing, blazing, raging Japanese hardcore. An amped up attack of SYSTEMATIC DEATH-styled throttle and raw overdrive with the creative, fresh sense of great Japanese classics—something that too easily gets side-stepped as bands around the world seek to color within the "Burning Spirits" lines. The lyrics are entirely in Japanese and these seven tracks date from 2005 and 2006—taking that time to keep turning the formula on its head. To the point and just long enough, a great EP!!! (KS)
(Irukandji c/o Vinnie La Russa, 436 Inverness Dr, Pacifica, CA 94044, vlarussa@gmail.com)

**THE BAGS – "All Bagged Up: The Collected Works 1977-1980" LP**

….What a great fucking punk band THE BAGS were!!!!!!! What fantastic hooks they had!!!!! Really creative song structuring!!!!!! Totally unique sound!!!! Kinda brings a tear to your eye, don't it????!!!!! There is absolutely *nothing* like old Los Angeles punk…..and no one can deny it!!!!!! For those that are fans of this period or just plain old BAGS fans, this record is a real treat!!!! First off you get a cool fold-over silk-screened cover…then there's an insert written by Brendan Mullen, the founder of the Masque with a snazzy early shot of THE BAGS in full "bag attire," third; it's on nice cherry colored vinyl, forth; it's got everything that was recorded by the band, studio and live…..and finally the "highlight" is the bad ass live cover of LOVE's "7 And 7 Is" done with total punk rock passion…..!!!!!!! Totally fucking recommended to teenagers who are trying to find themselves!!!!!! (SW)
(Artifix, www.artifixrecords.com)

**BANANAS – "A Slippery Subject" LP**

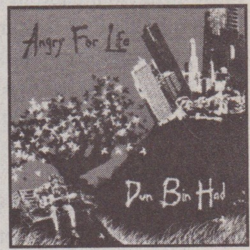
Scrappy, melodic feel-good punk from Sacramento that could have been on Lookout! Records 14 or 15 or years ago. I guess this is a re-release of a CD that came out five years ago; I've been aware of this band for a while (and may even have seen them in a drunken haze at some time) but this is the first time that I've actually sat down and listened to them. Fun, catchy punk, with a smart-ass attitude—they remind me a little of RADON. Guess I've been missing out. (AD)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, www.recesssrecords.com)

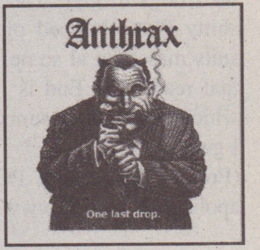
**BILL BONDSMEN – ".—. | ..—.. | ... | ..—.. | | -.— —- ..- | .-. . | ..-. ..- -.-. -.- . -.." LP**

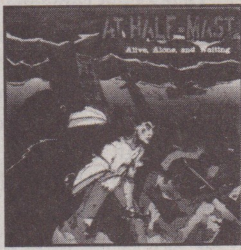
The cover of this record is remarkably bad—it is some sort of digital reenactment of baby dolls being incinerated and chopped up on a stove with a bottle of "Seman's Extra Dry Giz" in the background and a puppet devil overseeing the whole spectacle. Not only is it tasteless, it looks like shit. Fortunately, the music is nowhere near as terrible as the artwork. BILL BONDSMEN plays fast hardcore with an underlying rock influence. They do it with a bit of originality and the songs have some interesting parts. I think it is safe to say that they are influenced by 9 SHOCKS TERROR and some of the other Clevo bands (even though the BONDSMEN are from Michigan). They're not as raw as INMATES or as off-kilter as DARVOCETS but I'll bet these guys keep their PUNCTURE WOUND and RUINERS 7"s within easy grabbing distance. (CI)
(Burning Sensation, Regulus 25, 2221 Mt Katwijk Aan Zee, NETHERLANDS)

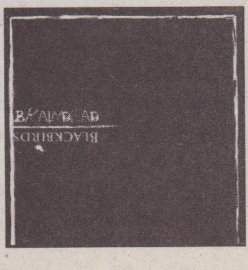
**BLACKBIRDS / BRAINDEAD – split EP**

Split records are cool because you get just enough of a band to make you want more. This only works if the bands are good, of course, but since both of these bands rip, you can't go wrong here! The theme of this record is a STOOGES cover from each band, as well as an offering of a few originals. BRAINDEAD hails from the East Coast and pounds out some excellent late-'80s/early-'90s-style hardcore that sounds like a dirtier INSIDE OUT, or a modern-sounding TURNING POINT. These guys have a knack for playing their instruments well without going metal, and are my favorite of the two. You should also check out their self-titled EP. Oh, and they do a decent cover of "Search and Destroy" on this, but the three originals are what you want to hear. BLACKBIRDS, from Michigan, displays an angry, dark side with a cool song called "Haves/Have Nots," which deals with our crumbling society. This is supposed to be two songs, but they blend in together as one epic track. And their cover of "I Wanna Be Your Dog," done with some serious power chords, will tear







your speakers apart because you will play it loud! Both bands here are cool and worth checking out. (BG)
(Burn Bridges, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.burnbridges.net)

**THE BLACK MARKET – "Subtle As a Brick" CD**
RANCID...as in file under. I think RANCID has surpassed SCREECHING WEASEL as the most influential band in this genre. These guys do it well as this is spirited and energetic. A good full length from this Australian band with nice and raw production. (RL)
(Black Market, blackmarketrecords.com.au)

**BLACKOUT – CD**
If you liked ASSRASH...But seriously, if you are into crusty street punks playing horrible, over-produced cider-puke rawk...This is music for people that think it's OK to bring their dogs to gigs. The back of the CD has a shitty Photoshopped picture of some men in suits marching at some 1940s rally with signs that read "The End is Near; We Want Beer," which pretty much sums up the crusty lifestyle I guess. (LG)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

**BLANCHE DAVIDIAN – "Orange Sunshine" CD**
Thank God someone finally has the balls to stick it to Rod Stewart and Claudia Schiffer—those two have been fucking up the scene for days! The Rod song is called "Rod Swallows"—get it?? Rod Stewart is *such a faggot!!!* If TURBONEGRO is the bully, BLANCHE DAVIDIAN is the little toady that follows him around the mall shrieking, "Hey, wait up!" until he's ditched outside of Wet Seal. Total shit rock, and not in the good way. How come these jackasses haven't packed up their soul patches and scrunchy cowboys hats and moved to LA? I'm praying that they get booked here at the Eagle and are served their own crank-filled livers by 100 vengeful bears and leather daddies. (JP)
(Vodka Tonic Media, PO Box 1975, Tempe, AZ 85280, www.vodkatonicmedia.com)

**BLUES – "Snakepit" CD**
BLUES' brand of music is in the same realm as bands you would see on MTV2 or FUSE—spazzy metal-core with a rock 'n' roll edge captured by their one-chord tuned-down-to-D guitars. There's no ignoring the vocals either, as they are right there belting out obscure lyrics in a half-yelled, half-screamed combo. Perfect band for that new wave of mall-punk to make them feel underground. (PL)
(Corrosive, www.corrosiverecordings.com)

**BOMB THE MUSIC INDUSTRY! – "Get Warmer" CD**
Goddamn. These guys are good. Really good. They combine the rough-hewn pop sensibilities of a HOT WATER MUSIC, mixed up with a dash of OPERATION IVY ska (plus the odd horn), and a wonderfully '80s flash of Casio keyboards. In-your-face infectious, and, as you can gather from their moniker, in-your-face political, in the DIY/anti-corporate way. But writing kick-ass songs always makes one want to dance with the messenger, not kill 'em. Quite superb. (RK)
(Asian Man/Quote Unquote, www.asianmanrecords.com, www.quoteunquoterecords.com)

**BRAND DISLOYALTY – "Nostalgia Peddlers" EP**
Stop/start, quiet/loud damage with noisy guitars and passionate, "emotional" lyrics. The dynamics and the muscular, metallic (but not heavy metal) guitar sound is very SHELLAC but it isn't homage. I also hear echoes of SQUIRREL BAIT. Pretty intense stuff for a trio of Aussies. I'm sure we'll hear more. (AM)
(Mekong Delta, 2/211 New Canterbury Rd, Petersham, NSW 2049, AUSTRALIA)

**BRUTAL KNIGHTS – "Life Ain't Cool" EP**
Lots of folks seem to be all over this band, but I don't see it. Sure, their lyrics are kinda funny—"Sex is a mystery, like the sphinx"—but it's still just bland punk with a vague hard-rock feel. They're probably a drunken hoot live, but they've yet to commit anything to wax that I find impressive at all. (MC)
(Riff Raff, 200 S. Mulberry St, Richmond, VA 23220)

**CANADIAN RIFLE – "Cinder Block" EP**
Solid, anthemic mid-tempo punk from another band I've been meaning to check out. They remind me a little of PANTHRO UK UNITED 13 but less rock and more punk. Gruff vocals, good songwriting, and a nice thick sound—this really could have came out on No Idea, since it has that Gainesville feel. This is very good. Are they Canadian? I don't know... (AD)
(Criminal IQ, 3501 N. Southport Ave, Chicago, IL 60657)

**CATHETER / MASSGRAVE – split CD**
Quite a grindcore gathering here. I have always felt a little lukewarm about CATHETER, but I have to give it to them—they are good, fast, and brutal. And in terms of grind I guess that means they deliver the goods. I find MASSGRAVE a lot easier to get into; their variety of gruff, blazing, dual-vocalled anarcho crust grind reminds me of EXTREME NOISE TERROR on meth and steroids or something. Having seen these dudes live I have some degree of concern as to whether one of their singers heads may explode in a grind-induced screaming frenzy. (NM)
(Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**CEASE UPON THE CAPITOL / SILBATO – split 3" CD**
Not sure exactly how this precious li'l disc ended up here for review; both bands' recordings date back several years, and the label's website hasn't been updated since 2005... Anyhoo, SILBATO hails from Italy and delivers four hardcore tunes—a bit towards the complex, chaotic end of things, but not enough to lose their catchiness and bite. Obscure English-language lyrics are screamed in the breathless, throat-shredding style. A modern update of ECONOCHRIST might not be the best comparison, but it's the closest one I can make. Nashville, Tennessee's CEASE UPON THE CAPITOL close out this mini-CD with two tracks of dense, melodic '90s-style emo of the political (as opposed to lovelorn) variety. Both bands are what I would describe as "good for the style." (CS)
(Shove, www.shoverecords.com)

**CHURCH POLICE – "Gilligan's Wings" EP**
What an intimidatingly interesting piece of history to tackle. Featured in the first issue of *Maximum Rocknroll* and on the *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* comp, CHURCH POLICE come pummeling out of non-existence with these three unreleased demo tracks from 1982. This Walnut Creek band's output includes very few releases, legitimate or otherwise. They had a single on RRR that I know little about and a few more demo tracks floating around out there. Not released, just...floating. Skulltones had the opportunity to hand over three of these floating, mud-covered gems to anyone who had been waiting patiently for access. Lucky for all, the sound quality is surprisingly good—so the murky effects shine through. CHURCH POLICE was the response to the Bay Area's tight-chested, claustrophobic, cloud-covered dreary call. These are noisy and crushing songs, hanging by a string of psych-melody with sometimes barely-there sinister vocals. This totally important bit of history is limited to 300. (AL)
(Skulltones, www.skulltones.com)

**CLOCKCLEANER – "Babylon Rules" CD**
I've never seen a CLOCKCLEANER show so perhaps I'm not qualified to weigh in on this one, since I believe that they're another beast live. We've all heard stories, haven't we? Anyway, expert or no, I can tell you that

*Babylon Rules*, the third full-length by the Philadelphia band who everyone has some sort of non-music based opinion about, is a slowed-down, menacing, thudding, drawn-back fist of frustrated distortion. And who knew it, but it's a goddamned creepy, slithering, swaggering, near Sunday night goth album on Load Records. I mean yeah, yeah, noise rock, loud, AmRep—check, check, check. It's still a CLOCKCLEANER record after all, but this one has tapped into some mesmerizing dark and angry BAD SEEDS-meets-GUN CLUB territory. Basically this is mid-tempo rock sludge on the verge of explosion a la JESUS LIZARD that you'd expect from the threesome but this time with an emphasis on an aggressive, dark, industrial edge. (AL)
(Load, www.loadrecords.com)

**CLUSTERFUCK – "How the West Was Won" LP**
I can't believe I had to review two albums this month featuring someone riding a giant squid on the cover (see also the FOUR YEAR STRONG review). This platter features a sexy Ronald Reagan riding on said cephalopod. CLUSTERFUCK from Connecticut features two members of the old band SEIZURE...it's always cool when some old-timers start new bands that still rip. Here we have their third record, following a 7" and a split EP with RAT BYTE. What does it sound like, you ask? Well, it's hardcore in the classic sense yet most of the songs are mid-paced and weird. There are some pretty fast moments but it gathers steam more from creativity than throttle. Think of a modern SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN with some more obscure influences. Good record…I will be ordering. (JU)
(Vital Center, 38 Wall Street, Valhalla, NY 10595)

**COKE BUST – "Demo" EP**
This is the Washington DC band's demo pressed onto vinyl. It has a sound that is similar to bands like TEAR IT UP and DOWN IN FLAMES, but they're straight edge and not afraid to let you know: "We've gathered all our eggs, and put them in a basket / When I die there will be an X on my casket." But don't be worried, there's also something for you punk kids out there, with songs like "Power Junkies" that say "F the System"! Also included on this record is a well-done cover of YOUTH OF TODAY's "Slow Down." This band seems pretty young. I'd like to see where they go from here. (PL)
(Headcount, www.headcoundrecords.com)

**COLERA – "Alguien Siega Vidas Por Mi" CD**
Oh man, this recording by COLERA (*not* the old Brazilian band) has so much potential but falls sadly flat. First bummer is the first track being an instrumental—I find that bogus and boring. Second bummer is that the mix is really distracting. The vocals are so awesome (reminds me of Mamen from VULPESS), but they are totally overpowered by the drums and wanky guitar leads. Basically, turn up those damn vocals and turn down the guitars, or get this girl a band she can shine in ASAP. (AA)
(Comu, Apartat de Correus 249, 12080 Castello, La Plana, SPAIN)

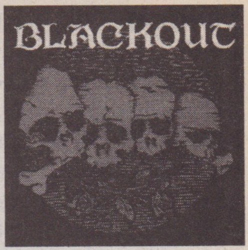
**COMMITMENT CREW – "Hisingen" EP**
With the band name and record label, I was expecting something youth crew, but this sounds a lot like SLAPSHOT or maybe a more Oi! version of DYS. Regardless, this band definitely looks to Boston for their influences. It's all here: the plodding riffs, the skinhead overtones in the lyrics, the coat of arms artwork, etc. Aside from the goofy name, I really like this. (CC)
(Crucial Response, Kaisersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY, www.crucialresponse.com)

**COUNTERACTIVE – "Through it All" CD**
I haven't seen a band with two mohawks in it for some time...not surprisingly this is charged-up punk with a big UK '82 influence, for fans of the CASUALTIES and all that. I guess it's pretty well done, but I just can't take this stuff seriously really...I mean, this music is good if you are drunk and have you're hair spiked, but otherwise...Zzzzzz. (AD)
(www.capunks.com)

**CPC GANGBANGS – "Mutilation Nation" LP**
Last month I had to review such contrived, goofy dog shit that I knew the pendulum just *had* to swing back my way with this batch. I was right. Sure, the super-reverb voice may show up a lot these days, but when you're as good as LEATHER NUN (before they gave up), all is forgiven. "One More Girl" has more balls than the rafters of a middle school gym. The most charming thing about this band is that where more deft guitar-os may trade leads, these guys just trade slop, as if they're going, "OK, I'll fuck up here and then *you* fuck up the *next* solo!" Oh, and the cover features a gentleman hanging from a noose sticking out of a poonanny. Adorable. (JP)
(Alien 8, no address)

**CRIPPLE BASTARDS – "Your Lies in Check" LP**
CRIPPLE BASTARDS' debut LP (originally released in '95) is a brain-numbingly boring collection of 69 grindcore tracks…any momentum these guys build is inevitably buried under one-dimensional blast-beats, shitty "metal" production, and corny big dog/little dog vocals. The fact that this crap is considered "extreme" is a fucking joke… (CS)
($10 ppd US/$16 ppd world: Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**CRUISE MISSILES – "Escalation" LP**
Potent mix of youth crew and powerviolence styles from this German band—the riffs, shout-outs, and varsity fonts of the former, and the speed, ferocity, and vocal bark of the latter. The singer's delivery is particularly reminiscent of the dude from INFEST, though not as tuff obviously (who could be?). It's all good 'til near the end of the last song, where some weird *singing* happens that definitely shouldn't. Oh well, this band broke up two years ago anyway, so I guess you're gonna have to check into these fellas' new projects or wait until they do a reunion tour in 2024 when the late-'00s HC revival kicks into full swing. It should be noted that this isn't a full-length LP; it's a one-sided 12" that plays on 45 rpm. (CS)
(Prügelprinz, www.myspace.com/prugelprinzrecords)



**DANGERLOVES – "Lipsmart/So This Is Love"**

Woah! This is a primo piece of girl-fronted bubblegum pop! I mean, sure, all the standard NIKKI CORVETTE-isms are front and center, but I can't help but have a soft spot for this kinda shit, when it's done as well as "Lipsmart." The flip falls a bit short by comparison, but that certainly won't detract from the countless spins side A will be getting. Features BAYONETTES folks...who knew? (MC)

(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

**DAS KAPITAL – "Died True" LP**

I think I'm probably just too cynical to appreciate anything this idealistic. Their lyrical content is so intense that the record is dominated by it. You barely notice that it really is melodic hardcore/punk rock. I can see this really doing it for a lot of folks, but not me. (KK)

(Johann's Face, PO Box Chicago, IL 60647, www.johannsface.com)

**DAYGLO ABORTIONS – "Here Today, Guano Tomorrow" LP**

Here we have the third full-length and first in a series of horrendous releases by this Canadian outfit. It's hard to believe that this came out only one year after their classic *Feed us a Fetus* album. By this point (1987), all of the elements that one would associate with a punk band had dissolved, with the exception of a complete disregard for tact. This is purely a metal record, and even as such, it still stinks. Damn, this is awful. (JU)

(Unrest, Suite 239, 10654 82nd Ave, Edmonton AB, T6E 2A7, CANADA, www.unrestrecords.com)

**DAYGLO ABORTIONS – "Little Man in the Canoe" LP**

I really don't want to be the asshole that ruins the party here, but does the world really need some of the reissues coming out these days, like the later-period DAYGLO ABORTIONS albums? I mean, there are some records that are timeless classics, and there are others that deserve to remain in the dusty two-for-a-dollar bins at second-rate vinyl stores. This one came out in 1995, and seriously I didn't even know they were still together at that time. It's like those ads you see for new CDs by bands like the EXPLOITED and stuff, with a band that is so far past its prime that it's downright embarrassing. The first two albums from the early '80s were OK, but after that, most of the music the band made seemed to fall under the banner of metal-influenced, mediocre punk rawk with lyrics that bordered somewhere between semi-cool and semi-retarded. Actually, there are a couple of decent tracks on this cream-colored vinyl reissue that remind me of ANARCHY 6 or MURPHY'S LAW, but I would highly suggest picking up *Out of the Womb* or *Feed Us a Fetus* first. (BG)

(Unrest, Suite 239, 10654-82 Ave., Edmonton, AB, T6E 2A7, CANADA, www.unrestrecords.com)

**DAYGLO ABORTIONS – "Two Dogs Fucking/Deux Chien Fourrent" LP**

Why why why but why? This is the DAYGLOS' fourth album—lowest-common-denominator scatological lyrics about sex and bodily functions over D-grade metal...plus a CROSBY, STILLS, NASH, AND YOUNG cover, and an actual "serious" song about censorship (probably a result of their legal troubles from the prior record). I'm pretty sure this didn't need to ever be released in the first place, so why the reissue? (CS)

(Unrest, Suite 239, 10654 82nd Ave, Edmonton AB, T6E 2A7, CANADA, www.unrestrecords.com)

**DAY OF THE DEAD / RUINER – split EP**

This is an across-seas split between RUINER from Baltimore, Maryland and DAY OF THE DEAD from Lisbon, Portugal. The RUINER side is melodic, mid-tempo hardcore with great up-front lyrics about being up-front and not having any apologies for it. DAY OF THE DEAD has a slightly heavier sound with fast and melodic parts followed by crushing breakdowns. This is the second split DAY OF THE DEAD has done with an American band—they also did one with THE DAMAGE DONE a few years back. If you're digging the Bridge 9. (PL)

(Burning Bridges, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211)

**THE DEAD KINGS – "Armed and Delicious" CD**

Even before I heard this CD, it already had the dreaded three-strikes-and-you're-out going against it. First, I don't think a band with "Kings" in the name has ever been good. Next, with band member names like "Biggy Stardust" and "Angus Hung," it just seems the band is trying a little too hard. Finally, they have a guy with a soul patch that looks like a bad Seth Rogan. Of course, being a reviewer I have to actually listen to the CD, and you know what? THE DEAD KINGS aren't really that bad! Light-hearted punk rock with glam and straight bar rock influences that sort of recall TURBONEGRO before the joke turned on itself. Nothing groundbreaking, but at least it's another example of why three strike laws don't work. (JF)

(Scat Boy, www.thedeadkings.com)

**DEATH TOKEN – "4-Track Attack" EP**

Hell yeah, I can *so* hang with this. Since the minute it showed up for review, I've been drooling over this record. As the title would imply, these recordings were made on a four-track in the band's practice space, and the result couldn't be any more raw if the meat were torn straight off a living beast. Seven blood-boiling tracks of blown-out thrash that fall somewhere between a raw Scandi sound and some of the noisier Japanese bands. Some purists might be put off by the vocal effects, but I love it! This is a killer EP and will most likely find its way into my year-end Top Ten. Also, if you haven't already, track down their *Walking Dead Life* EP and split with KYKLOOPPIEN SUKUPUUTTO. You shall not be disappointed. (JU)

(Even Worse, www.geocities.com/evenworse)

**DEATH WITH A DAGGER / WORKSHY – split EP**

WORKSHY's side of the record starts off a-blazing and gives us a noisy, modern-sounding hardcore tune—it's short, fast, and cool. They follow this track up with a really long song with slow and heavy parts. Actually, that is what it sounds like on here but the track lists says that there are five songs? Shit, I thought it was one long one with various parts; the grooves must be tight on the record. DEATH WITH A DAGGER also plays in the vein of a more modern sounding hardcore band but they have some burly sounding bro-chants on both tracks; they creep a bit on the chugga but not enough to make me hurl. A decent split release of newer bands. (MS)

(El Paso/Deaf Forever, www.elpasorecordsonline.com)

**THE DEGENERICS – "Generic Record Collection" CD**

Whew, over 78 minutes of THE DEGENERICS! This was a Jersey band in the late-'90s/early-'00s; I remember they seemed to have a devoted local following and always saw their name on T-shirts and flyers, but never actually heard the band until now. THE DEGENERICS' sound is a little hard to pin down—snotty, screamed vocals, straightforward hardcore but with not-quite-youth-crew melodic guitar-work, bits of thrash, metal, reggae, surf...I get the feeling it evolved organically out of four kids who just wanted to start a punk band, as opposed to ape a particular style. *Generic Record Collection* collects, I believe, their entire discography—a full-length LP from 2000, three EPs from '96, '97, and '05, compilation and demo tracks—and includes some unreleased outtakes and live stuff. The LP stuff seems a little over-produced/overwrought in hindsight, but the earlier stuff is rawer and more appealing to me. For those DEGENER-

ICS fans out there however, this will be a must-have. (CS)
(Soulrebel, no address)

**D.I. – "On the Western Front" CD**

According to the (appallingly poorly written, and anonymously penned) liner notes, this is D.I.'s eighth record. They've certainly been doing it on and off since the early '80s and, along with the ADOLESCENTS and SOCIAL DISTORTION (both of whom main man Casey did time with early on), helped define that original, driving, melodic Southern California sound. I'm relieved to say that this is pretty good—for lumbering dinosaurs, they still have a tune or two in there, along with that distinctive sound. Perhaps not as good as "Pervert Nurse" or "Hang Ten in East Berlin," but not so far off either. A keeper, if you ask me... (RK)
(Suburban Noize, www.diunderground.com)

**DICKTIONHEAD – "...Because the Scene Could Suck Less" EP**

This self-described "tardcore" band started as a take-the-bull-by-the-horns reaction to what they felt was a lame scene in Seattle. The result is crazy hybrid of punk-funk-metal-street-pop-core that is lively and sincere. It's hard for me to get into a song like "My Slutty Wife," but some of their other songs' lyrics made me smile, like "City transit, cattle car funeral procession / They still play grunge on the radio stations." A buncha dudes doing their own thing and having a great time. (PC)
(myspace.com/dicktionhead)

**DIRTY TACTICS – "Love Is Dead, Art Is War" CD**

Melodic three-chord punk from this Philly three-piece. It's tuneful, catchy, and not too polished. They're apparently influenced by the CLASH and REPLACEMENTS, but I'd say they sound more like GRABASS CHARLSTONS meets the US BOMBS—that is to say they have an obvious '77 influence, but it's full, chunky, and played with a youthful energy akin to the newer bands who seem to be influenced, knowingly or not, by the young Gainesville bands of yesterday/year. What I'm trying to say is—it's pretty good...I like it. (AD)
(www.dirtytactics.net)

**DISCLOSE / SCARRED FOR LIFE – split EP**

Noisy crustlords hailing from Japan, DISCLOSE gives us three tracks of what we have come to expect from this band—fuzzed-out, lo-fi insanity. RIP Kawakami. SCARRED FOR LIFE from Long Beach, California brings us three blasters that hit nice and hard. The pounding drums and screamed vocals are a good combination, but the guitars are way too low in the mix and could have been much stronger. So if you're looking for a comparison, imagine BROKEN BONES violently tonguing DISCHARGE and this record is the slobber. (MS)
(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801)

**DISCOCKS / NEGATIVES – split CD**

As you could have guessed with the name, Tokyo's DISCOCKS have a slight DISCHARGE influence. Their five songs definitely stem from the UK82 hardcore sound, and do it justice. On the other hand, Sweden's THE NEGATIVES have a much more driving, rocking sound not unlike MOTÖRHEAD. If you like UK punk from the '80s, then you are going to dig both these bands. (CC)
(MCR Company, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr)

**DISCOVER – "Stench of Death" CD**

14 tracks of raw D-beat—which is kind of a definition in itself needing no further explanation. That's enough for a lot of folks who are working their way through the "Dis" section of the dictionary. This is on-point with desperate, screamed vocals, pounding distorted hardcore, and practice-space recording values. While DISCOVER fills all those blanks in a boss manner, I'd love to see more bands take the sound away from tradition and deeper into new territory. At the same time, the CD rounds out with covers by SHITLICKERS, DOOM, and BATTLE OF DISARM, so I think the point is more about continuation of tradition than a wild expression of creativity. At least the lyrics, which are total DISCHARGE haikus, attack modern political situations and problems (current war on terror, etc). Well done, but pretty standard issue. Nice, pressed CD with foil-stamped packaging. (KS)
(Black Konflik, No. 59, Lorong 3, TMN Kenanga, 27600 Raub, Pahang, MALAYASIA)

**DISNIHIL – "Parasites" CD**

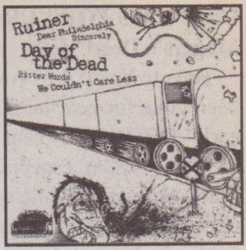
Fast and competent modern American(ized) Dis-band, Dis-beating their own way with octave chords (see '90s hardcore/post-punk) and subtle guitar leads, leaving room for otherwise frenzied and well played motoring, not unlike the sounds of FIGHTING DOGS or BALLAST. There's also a bit of disco-crust seepage, but it's not terminal; this riff tank should have a lot of life left in it. Vocals are mid-range and pissed sounding, but it seems more aesthetic than message-driven judging by the lyrics (which are also fucking hard to read, probably intentional), not fatal. This is a decent if not classic Dis-disc. (BS)
(Chainsaw Safety)

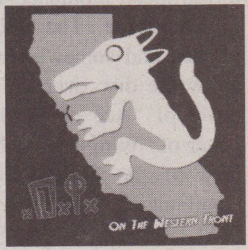
**DÖDSDÖMD – "Beskada Var Vakra Varld" EP**

The always-intriguing DÖDSDÖSMD has a superb three-song release here—crushing Scandinavian HC with an energy that would do the SHITLICKERS proud. I don't know Swedish, but the cover art suggests another of their theme records—likely on culture's sanctioning of religious violence. The cover art is politically biting, and the songs—one as short as fourteen seconds—is up to the band's exceptional standard. S recommended. (SS)
(New Noise, www.newnoiserecords.com)

**DORY TOURETTE AND THE SKIRTHEADS – "Rock Immortal" LP**

It's the first time on vinyl for the reissue of this bizarro record that could only have been conceived in the Bay Area in the late '90s. Imagine BUDDY HOLLY as a meth-head who constantly thinks about fucking and may or may not be a pedophile. Think of the record he would make. Picture him crooning sweet ballads about junkie sex, crystal meth, and nine-year old girls. Is it horrifying? Is it hilarious? It's both, but it's kind of brilliant too. (AA)
(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146)





**DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Dance When Maggie's Dead" EP**

Hate to break it to you lads, but Maggie has been gone for near on 20 years.....!!! I love the early DRONGOS gear (we're talking late-'70s/early-'80s), especially the *Eternity* single. They reformed a while ago and have released a bunch of stuff that I haven't kept too much track of, although none of it is bad at all. Like many reformed bands, they thickened their sound and have improved their playing; unlike many reformed bands, they haven't gone metal but have continued to sound like a street-punk ABRASIVE WHEELS. If you dig recent street punk, check 'em...Me? I'll stick to the old 7"s. (TB)

(dekbaker@blueyonder.co.uk)

**DRUNKARDS – "Sentenza di Morte" CD**

Metallic Italian hardcore. This mixes a lot of sounds, some crusty moments, some '80s thrash metal moments, and at other times just fast hardcore. The vocals are really high-pitched and somewhat annoyed me but I did enjoy the disc overall. There is an unneeded cover of "Ace of Spades" but an enjoyable cover of "Whiplash," which gives you a good idea of the band's roots. On "Il Sangue Continua a Scorrere" they sound like a sped-up DISCHARGE. If you like it fast and don't mind the metal influence, check this out. (MH)

(nucleardrunkx@libero.it)

**EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Get Up Morning" LP**

Lauded by the most obsessive punk vinyl hounds as thee current saving grace of Australian punk, EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING's debut LP has finally made its way stateside. After spinning this LP countless times, I'm in full agreement with the dorky chatter—this is easily the best Australian punk release in several years, no doubt about it. EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING updates your favorite '70s/'80s Aussie "Murder Punk" greatness in the same way that FM KNIVES updated catchy UK punk, meaning that there are interesting personal touches delivered in a classic framework, making something both original and immediately familiar. They just know what the fuck they're doing. Fans of Australian punk rock should stop at nothing to secure a copy of this. (MC)

(Dropkick, PO Box 1072, North Fitzroy VIC 3068, AUSTRALIA)

**OS ESTUDANTES – "Album" LP**

This is one fucking cool record. Sounds like a blend of old US punk with bits of Brazilian punk mixed in there. Snotty vocal delivery and catchy songwriting make this a great listen. Nice stark silk-screened cover with minimal graphics adds to the whole package here. Now, onto the bad stuff. This really good record with cool art (and did I mention that it is on yellow vinyl?) has a major flaw. There are only 100 fucking copies in existence—now isn't that cute? Good luck getting a hold of it. (MS)

(Navena/Laja)

**EXTINCTION OF MANKIND – "Northern Scum" LP**

Holy shit. EXTINCTION OF MANKIND is one of my favorite bands, truth be told. Their crushing variety of apocalyptic crust metal is just infectious! Inspired by the classics ANTISECT, ENERGETIC KRUSHER, AMEBIX, AXEGRINDER, and even CELTIC FROST, these guys put their own spin on it and it just comes out amazing every time. The last LP *The Nightmare Seconds* was absolutely incredible, and *Northern Scum* I think almost tops it. One of my favorites of the year, easily. (NM)

(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

**THE FEELERS – "2007 European Tour" EP**

More of the same trashed-out rock nonsense you've probably come to expect from THE FEELERS. Loud, fast, loads of treble, and over before you blink. And a cute little drunken voicemail message from *MRR*'s own Mitch Cardwell concludes this three-song EP. How sweet. (CK)

(P. Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

**FLAMING COCKS / PHANTOMS ON FIRE – split EP**

Both these bands from the Czech Republic are peddling a similar brand of wannabe-Yank Warped Tour punk. They've memorized the HELLACOPTERS/ZEKE/whatever stylebook. Pompadours: check. Stand-up bass (despite not playing anything close to psychobilly): check (FLAMING COCKS). Songs about chicks: check. Cartoon of naked girl with guitar on the cover: check. An endorsement from a tattoo shop: check. I was ready to totally slam this record. For what it's worth, however, PHANTOMS ON FIRE at least has memorable songs and their singer has a good DANZIG howl. If the overall aesthetic wasn't so tired I'd have been more into it. (AM)

(Burning Rubber, burningrubber@volny.cz)

**THE FLESHIES – LP**

The first FLESHIES full-length finally sees a proper vinyl release seven years later, thanks to, among others, MRR Radio's own Fred Schrunk. While more straightforward than their later stuff, this still shows the band that always reminded me of kids who could never get over their love of East Bay pop punk but still did enough drugs to really enjoy the BUTTHOLE SURFERS and SCRATCH ACID. This LP is raw, powerful, and poppy. A great re-release. (JF)

(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146, fredschrunk@yahoo.com)

**FOR THE WORSE – "Blood, Guts, Going Nuts" LP**

Fuck yes! You skinheads and hardcore fucks are in luck! Kangaroo Records and Even Worse Records have arranged to re-release the ferocious 2005 album *Blood, Guts, Going Nuts* by FOR THE WORSE!!! Every time you feel the brute strength from this hardcore masterpiece you will be inspired! Brian, Dominic, Mike, Ryan, and Tommy work so goddamn well, they're a Boston hardcore machine on this opus—the raw power is almost frightening! On side one, you are treated to now classic hardcore paeans such as "Empty Threats," "Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Speak Nothing," "The Day the Music Died," "Square Peg, Round Hole" and "We're All Going to Die." Fucking amazing! In "Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Speak Nothing," the lyrics touch on a subject that rings true for all working class people: Lazy people procrastinating and wasting their opportunities lying on the couch. In "Square Peg," the well though-out lyrics speak of how one is "always feeling out of place…Buried up to our necks / Unable to escape / The deck has been stacked against us since the very beginning / We will continue to rise above and never admit defeat!" Fuck yes! Side two of this LP is just as strong! The songs will devastate your brain! Listen to "Busted Wide Open," "Religious Superstition," "Sweet 16," and "Battle Royal." Yes! That is hardcore for the people. These songs offer a view into lives of the men in FOR THE WORSE. There will be parallels in your life! Get this great LP—finally on vinyl! (BR)

(Even Worse/Kangaroo, www.geocities.com/evenworse, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

**THE FLATLINERS – "The Great Awake" CD**

Energetic melodic punk that reminds me of DILLINGER FOUR and THE ATARIS. Although this band is known for being a bit ska or reggae, this release is pretty light on that stuff. This Canadian band has the hooks going on with the vocals and the guitars. A strong release. (RL)

(Fat, www.fatwreck.com)

**FOUR STAR ALARM – "Tilted/Cities in Dust"**

Two songs, one a cover by SUGAR (Bob Mould's old band) and the last a live recording

from their WLUW radio session. I was expecting a whole lotta HÜSKER DÜ worship due to the choice of cover, and whilst that is heavily in the mix, there's way more going on. Some of the finer rock moments of FLUFF and MOTO come quickly to mind, a slight hint of HOT WATER MUSIC, and a throwback whiff of SHADES APART. Solid throughout, and a single that's definitely making a positive statement for the future of this band. (SD)
(Underground, 12220 W. Hood Ave. #2, Chicago, IL 60660, www.undercomm.org)

**FOUR YEAR STRONG – "Rise or Die Trying" CD**

Let me start by stating that this CD's cover art is a work of pure genius. It's got a wizard and a chimp decked out in wizard gear, riding a giant squid in outer space, waging war against an army of robotic metal sharks. Metal sharks...and giant squid...in outer space...my mind is *blown*. Speaking of blown—the music, well, it truly does blow. If you've ever read an issue of *AMP* magazine, then you know what this piece of shit sounds like. "Hardcore punk" for 18-year-old devilocked sensitive dudes with full-sleeve tattoos who hang out at the mall after Guitar Center closes. Think stupid, emotive "singing" over chug metal with out-of-place gang choruses, and every now and then a keyboard pops up to make this turd even more unpleasant to swallow. The liner notes on this disc credit someone with "guitar tones." Does that mean that this dude just sat around trying to figure out the exact settings on their amps to make my brain go from hating this kind of crap to wishing eternal broken fingers for every musician who plays it? If so, I'm glad that guy has a job. (JU)
(I Surrender, 314 Hyslip Ave, Westfield, NJ 07090, www.isurrenderrecords.com)

**THE FUCKING BUCKAROOS – CD**

I'm a real sucker for a good banjo. Even a half-decent banjo. And you won't find 'em often in these pages. Fortunately, the BUCKAROOS have them in spades, along with all the other (requisite) electric folk items—drums, bass, acoustic guitar, mandolin, and some gnarled, yet beautifully harmonizing male vocals. Songs of travel, and loss, and loneliness...well, the kind of stuff you'd expect. Musically, they're like a rough-hewn POGUES or FLOGGING MOLLY, less the obvious Celtic influence. Old-timey and proud of it. I'm sure they're already a bit hit with the rebels, urban pirates, and hobos...and that's as it should be. But everyone else might want to take notice too. 20 tracks you'll want to remember. (RK)
(www.myspace.com/thefuckingbuckaroos)

**THE FUCKING WRATH – "Season of Evil" LP**

Hot damn, there is a lot of long-winded jam-crust to review this month. By jam-crust I mean...imagine a band like FROM ASHES RISE...got it in your head? OK, good. Now take away the catchy melodies and replace them with either A: a SABBATH/Southern Rock influenced riff, or B: just play something boring for too long—most definitely heavy on the rock. For a reference, think of some hype-band that all the stupid metal heads that occasionally dip their little peckers into "punk" are gobbling up, e.g., KYLESA (only a bit faster) or BARONESS (whom I've never actually heard, but this is what I assume they sound like). Not that this is bad, it's just not entertaining, emotion-inducing, or exciting. Jam-crust. New for the '07. You heard it here first. (JU)
(Challenge the Throne, 2403 Peacock Ave, Ventura, CA 93003, www.challengethethrone.com)

**FYP – "5 Year Plan" LP**

Totally great, head-bouncing San Pedro punk rock! In the '90s I didn't have the attention span to get into FYP's slew of releases, so I just waited it out until TOYS THAT KILL came along. (TOYS THAT KILL=great band.) So, embarrassingly, this is the first FYP release that I've ever given a good listen. Boy, was I missing out! FYP has all that TOYS THAT KILL rhythm-driven, distort-ified, catchy-chorus punkiness, but with a snottier, sloppier, more carefree vibe. The similarities make sense since this was recorded near the end of FYP's existence, before they evolved into TOYS THAT KILL. I'm totally digging this shit and will now have to pull those older, unlistened-to FYP records out of my closet. Three cheers! (PC)
(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733-1666, www.recessrecords.com)

**THE GATEWAY DISTRICT – "Little Bird" EP**

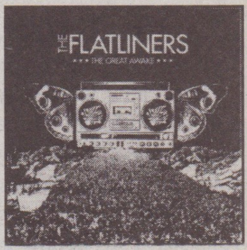
THE GATEWAY DISTRICT is a Minneapolis band (er, just so ya know: featuring members of THE SOVIETTES, RIVETHEAD, BANNER PILOT, etc.) and I believe this is their first piece of vinyl. Four tracks of well-executed pop punk; nice 'n' noisy, a tinge of melancholy, and none too sappy neither. If that sounds like your thing, then I'm giving you the thumb's-up. 400 on black vinyl, 100 on blue (make that 99, 'cause this one belongs to *MRR*). (CS)
(Rock Bottom, 25510 East Comfort Dr, Forest Lake, MN 55025)

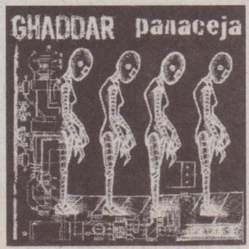
**GERM ATTAK – "Zapatista" EP**

Pretty rockin' HC thrash punk from these Ottawans. The DAYGLO ABORTIONS name is not lost on me but I can't say I see a huge influence from the Canuck heroes. Definitely this has some UK and Japanese crusty influences and manages to blend the influences pretty well. I can't wait to hear more from these lads. On the awesome Whisper in Darkness label, which as per usual has a killer layout. (NM)
(Whisper in Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240-0113)

**GET IT TODAY / HELD HOSTAGE – split EP**

This record didn't look like much to me on the outside, but actually this is really cool. HELD HOSTAGE is grindy INFEST-mongering power violence with two fucking bassists! They're from the States. GET IT TODAY is an uncreatively named but very cool Malaysian band that really mixes it up. There's youth crew, rockin' stuff, then it goes into blazing grind reminiscent of MONSTER X! Too cool! (NM)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630, www.givepraiserecords.com)





**GET THE MOST – "Moment in Time" EP**

OK, so I'm going to get this out there right away—I can't get past how much the beginning of this record sounds like a TEN YARD FIGHT song. Not that they were the first band to use the harmonic guitars with tom rolls, but I think they forever ruined it for me. Aside from that, this record is really awesome. *Moment in Time* is this Vancouver, BC band's second release. Excellent youth crew hardcore that's right up there with current greats like THE FIRST STEP. Except for the longhair drummer, everyone in the band looks right off a record insert from 1988. I feel that they could have picked a better picture to use for the front cover though; I saw what they were trying for, but just feel that it was a poor imitation of a classic cover. (PL)
(Crucial Response, Kaisersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY, www.crucialresponse.com)

**GHADDAR / PANACEJA – split EP**

Devastatingly righteous dudes from Allentown, Pennsylvania, GHADDAR play grit-bathed radical punk/fast hardcore with chaotic, noisy chord-progressions that break freely into crushing mosh parts a la late '80s BOSTON. Good stuff. PANACEJA plays more berzerker-core punk blasting into JENNY PICCOLO and ASSHOLE PARADE terrain. (BS)
(Feral Kid, 29 Custer St, Buffalo, NY 14214)

**GIANT HAYSTACKS / OUTNAUTS – split EP**

You know when someone leaves you, it's still all fresh, and it seems like reminders of them turn up constantly to remind you that they're gone? Yeah, well if GIANT HAYSTACKS has any more posthumous releases I'm gonna cry. Those charming GANG OF FOUR-esque post-punkers contribute two very fine songs to their side of this rockin' little record. Their split-mates, the OUTNAUTS of Kyoto, play more straight-up punk/hardcore but with a dynamic rhythm section that makes things a little more interesting. It's another hit from Snuffy Smiles; seems like Yoichi makes it happen every time. (AA)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicjo, Shichiku, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603-8117, JAPAN)

**HEARTFELT BASTARD – "EP'd My Pants" EP**

Jeez, haven't heard anything like this in quite some time. Who knew there were bands around in 2007 that still wanted to sound like GUTTERMOUTH? Nothing on this is funny; it could be the soundtrack playing at any given shopping mall food court. Jesus Christ… (MC)
(One Gram Worm, 614 Cowan, Fort Collins, CO 80524)

**HOME BLITZ – CD**

HOME BLITZ is a one-man band from New Jersey. The songs are impassioned bits of post-punk or garage punk mixed with a bit of '70s rock, though not enough to be annoying. This could be some REAL KIDS demo if JAD FAIR was the singer of the band at the time. The recordings are very lo-fi, but hey, who cares? This is cool. (CK)
(Gulcher, hometown.aol.com/gulcherrecords)

**HOSTAGES – "Legend in My Head, Failure to the World" EP**

I think as I get older I have less and less patience for emo lyrics. "I'm not the type to question one's fate, but when the things that you love make way for ones that you truly hate you burn yourself at the stake," and, "These friends are traitors they would suffer your loss if it meant that they could gain." Chunky chugga chugga hardcore with lyrics like the above. Sounds OK on the surface but I doubt I'd ever listen to this again. From Philadelphia and reminds me a bit of the HOPE CONSPIRACY. Yawn. (MH)
(Burning Bridges, 2961 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.burnbridges.net)

**HOT BUTTERED ANAL – "Please Kill Me" CD**

Somebody should really take this band up on that offer. Juvenile lyrics that score zero on the Laugh-O-Meter and the most generic and tired riffs that would make "Louie Louie" seem like a contemporary jazz classic. (SD)
(www.hotbutterdedanal.com)

**I ACCUSE! / LIFE SET STRUGGLE – split EP**

For a minute there I got excited thinking that LIFE SET STRUGGLE had gotten back together, but alas, I realized I was merely left with a few unreleased songs to serve as a final goodbye. But these are four fucking ragers of such hardcore immensity that it'll have you pulling the board out of the closet even if you haven't ridden in months! In case you missed them while they were around, these guys played first-rate hardcore thrash like it was nobody's business. Most of the tracks on this slab involve skating, like the song "Speed Freaks," which uses classic quotes by Neil Blender and Jeff Phillips (RIP) as lyrics. It's not all boards and bruises, though, as they also dwell hatefully on cookie-cutter posers. I ACCUSE! should be part of your lexicon by now when describing bands that have come out in the last few years that fucking rule! Here are four tracks of manic thrash that are bound to renew your faith in all things hardcore. The words are cries of frustration due to people's inaction and apathy in this fucked up world, or just from being pissed at yourself for fucking up sometimes like humans do. My favorite is "Billboard Bullshit," which deals with the capitalist advertisements that infiltrate our minds. This is totally worth tracking down. (BG)
(Shock To The System, PO Box 300991, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)

**INSTANT ASSHOLE – "DUI or Die" EP**

Yes! INSTANT ASSHOLE has another raging punk slab prepared for your consumption! Scotty and the mighty Tankcrimes Record label brings you this pissed-off punk music! High-register vocals teamed up with blazing guitars and intelligent lyrics to prick your sensibilities. INSTANT ASSHOLE confronts the listener with questions about drinking too much alcohol, fighting for the wrong reason, police abuse, and tenuous friendships. Now that JELLO BIAFRA has confined his incessant bleating to the spoken-word circuit, you must embrace INSTANT ASSHOLE with their piercing vocals and heartfelt politics. (BR)
(Tankcrimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com)

**INTELLIGENCE – "Deuteronomy" LP**

I know, I know…I thought it should have been called "Dude-eronomy" too! Now that the band is POPULAR SHAPE-less, any remaining traces of beauty, hope, and optimism those children might have contributed are obliterated, allowing the absolute misanthropy of the CEO to bloom and rot. "How to Improve Your Hearing Without Listening" gives you that MAGAZINE fever dream without the yawns and Pernod chin-stroking. Great playing, desperate, but still understated singing. It's how TELEVISION should have sounded. See? A good review without mentioning TUBEWAY ARMY or WIRE! (JP)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90041, www.intheredrecords.com)

**IRON BUTTER / IRRITATE Split EP**

Finland's IRRITATE are mid-tempo sludge-metal with CARCASS or whatever-style deep-throated grind vocals—a total snooze-fest with one original and a cover of "Will Evil Win?" by RATTUS (not their finest moment in my book…). While this isn't grind, it has the same fault of mediocre grind—extreme vocals that theoretically carry the intensity. They are absurdly wild but they fail to patch largely uninspired tunes that date back to 2000 and 2002 and were probably on the cutting room floor for a reason. New York's IRON BUTTER are blown-out, demo snippets of second-long tracks—total distortion fest that includes a guitar noodle-laden SODOM cover…more exercises in noise than listenable blasting. (KS)
(Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**ISKRA – "Selected Works" CD**

Alright! Unholy blackened crust from Canada, with ex-members of BLACK KRONSTADT. This CD is almost a discography that includes their self-titled first LP, tracks from a couple splits, and some live songs—everything except their split LP with AGAINST EMPIRE. If you are a fan raging metallic crust, ISKRA is one of the best bands these days. Really. (AA)

(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapo-lis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

**JACK – "Mmvi Ctenomys Blainv" CD**

Based on the artwork, my first impression of this CD was "Oh great, another bar rock band trying to make it big," but JACK is not that at all. From Hungary, this band mixes crushing blasts with mid-tempo hardcore, and the lyrics are about all the injustice in the world. A word of advice to this band—take more time on your next layout so people don't think that you're a terrible bar band. (PL)

(no address)

**J CHURCH – "The Horror of Life" LP**

I only paid passing attention to Lance Hahn's Revolving J CHURCH Revue for many, many years until being blown away by this Austin incarnation on its 2002 US tour. Perhaps coming close to death has put new life into Lance's musical endeavors, or maybe I've just been clueless to his great talents all along. Whatever—J CHURCH has put out nothing but top-notch material in last few years and this LP is another goodie. Non-cliché pop-punk segues seamlessly into intelligent indie rock, and then it gets all thrashy and tough sounding and mellows out again at the end, setting an example (hopefully!) for more bands break out of their molds a little bit. So good! (PC)

(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

**J CHURCH / SOUND ON SOUND – split EP**

I'm not sure I like the newer, faster J CHURCH: their original here goes by so fast that the hooks don't quite grab me, and it's harder to focus on their strong suit, i.e. Lance's lyrics. It's all gone a bit melodic hardcore. I must admit to being blown away by the credible DANZIG impression on the cover of "Where Eagles Dare" though. Chicago's SOUND ON SOUND, while taking their name from a BIG BOYS song (maybe?) come across like indie-rock for *Punk Planet* readers. *Their* cover song I didn't know (it's by BILLY JOE SHAVER) but it rocks. If their original was trimmed down to a minute and a half and played with the same energy, I'd probably have like it too. (AM)

(Underground Communique, 1220 West Hood Ave. #1, Chicago, IL 60660, www.undercomm.org)

**JET BOYS – "Teenage Thunder Revisited" LP**

…..Man, what a fucked up rock n roll band these JET-BOYS from Japan are!!!!! These cocksuckers really take the cake with their high-octane full frontal attack complete with screaming vocals (in Japanese and what sounds like it might be English but I'm not sure) and Johnny Thunders licks galore!!!!! The music here is in the same ballpark as the DEVIL DOGS but much wilder…..much raunchier!!!!!!! There's also quite a bit of DEAD BOYS action being aped as well!!!!! The song titles are great; "Shit Down," "Kick Out the Poster," "Get Out My Girl," "Fuck You Tokio," etc……Also, judging from their appearances this trio looks like they are proper scum bags without any shame in their game!!!!!! This collection of material appears to be made up of previously released and unreleased cuts for you and your moronic peer group to enjoy and make babies to…….open up and say "ah"!!!!! (SW)

(Demolition Derby, Nekkerspoelstr 29, 2800 Mechelen, BELGIUM, www.demderby.com)

**DAVE JONES XPERIENCE – "Mean People Suck" CD**

The cover has a cat wearing sunglasses with a speech-bubble that says, obviously, "Mean People Suck." Dave Jones played drums on *Victim in Pain* by AGNOSTIC FRONT. He was also in MENTAL ABUSE. In 1989, his car was run over by an 18-wheeler truck and he was declared dead but somehow survived. It's hard to talk shit about an album that has emerged triumphant from so much trauma and pain. Dave played every instrument on this CD, recorded it, and put it out himself. It also features "The Spring Peepers of Pine Cone Forest" on back-ups, as well as a dog called Lady and a rooster called Arnold. Imagine DANIEL JOHNSON as a real big DEAD BOYS or RAMONES fan, maybe? It has an outsider music quality and is imbued with such sincerity and feeling. If you are into punk on the outsider-art tip this will probably be right up your street. I really enjoyed listening to this and reading his story. You should go to his website and check it out; it's got all the lyrics and you can send off for the record there too. Apparently he left a message at MRR saying that the cat on the cover likes wearing the sunglasses. (LG)

(Daynite Sky Media, PO Box 211, Narrowsburg, NY 12764, www.davejonesxperience.com)

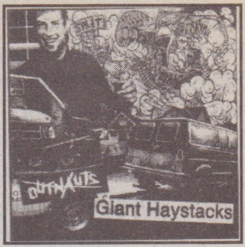
**JUGGLING JUGULARS "When I See/Addicted"**

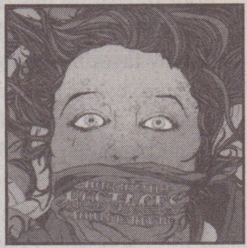
A limited edition EP by Finland's veterans JUGGLING JUGULARS and a farewell to their bassist of 17 years! Always rooted in that interesting, somewhat experimental early-'90s nexus of avant-garde rock, pop, and hardcore—here the two tracks are more song-driven punk than quirky or hardcore. The A-side "What I See" is a great pop song that competes well with the Danish school (GORILLA ANGREB, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, etc.) of catchiness. Excellent lyrics! The B-side is a more straightforward, upbeat track with shout-along choruses as it stomps forward. Good send-off and a solid EP. (KS)

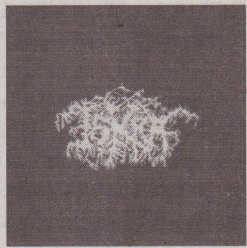
(Kamaset Levyt, c/o Nakari, Sorinkatu 6 B, 33100 Tampere, FINLAND, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen)

**KAKKA HÄTÄ 77 – "Totaalinen Kakkahätä" CD**

A compilation of two 7"s by this Finnish band that I knew was gonna be good judging by the cover of a mohawked punk cross-country skiing! This shit is real party music; it takes the gang sing-alongs of bands like HARD SKIN to a new level with the whole song being a gang chorus. This band is a mix of the COCKNEY







REJECTS and some DIY basement band from Florida. I can't understand a lick of what these Finns are yelling, but I'm 100% into the party vibe. This is how Oi! music should sound. Epic. (TB)
(Combat Rock Industry, PO Box 65, 11101 Rmk, FINLAND)

**KILLROY – "Football Chants & Angry Rants" CD**
A Southern California Oi! band from the '80s reformed. Every song seems like a joke, but that may be because I can't believe a US band would use "football" as the rest of the world uses it (aka soccer) and expect to be taken seriously. They are trying to write Oi! anthems, but none of the choruses really force you to sing along. (CK)
(Killroy, www.killroypunk.com)

**LAMPS – "II" LP**
Prior to hearing this new sophomore LP by the LAMPS, I had already considered them as one of my favorite current bands. After hearing this album, every great expectation I had was completely surpassed. For those unfamiliar with the band, the LAMPS have a knack for creating some of the most negative, frustrated, and awkward (in a good way) music around right now. Odes to severe disdain for the vast majority of social interaction (not to mention people in general!) are delivered in the perfect way: *loud* and explosive. Even more surprising is how catchy these booming tunes end up being, as I find myself "humming" the mantras and crashes in several situations. Perhaps I can relate too much? Whatever the case, there's no denying the tightly wound power on any given tune found here. A monster of an album and my early pick for the best long-player of 2007. (MC)
(In the Red, www.intheredrecords.com)

**DOME LA MUERTE AND THE DIGGERS – "Sorry, I'm a Digger" EP**
At first I was a little unsure about this one—it sounded like maybe they were trying a little too hard. But I have to tell you, the disc grew and grew on me. If you're a fan of melodic punk rock that is heavily influenced by the fuzzy sound of the '60s, you should dig this one. It's not always my sort of thing, but this one definitely works for me. It's also got a nice, heavy sleeve and a color insert. Well done. (KK)
(Area Pirata, www.areapirata.com)

**LIAR'S ACADEMY – "Run for Cover" EP**
Happy rock formula for those who missed 1989 the first time around. Something about that REPLACEMENTS/JAWBREAKER style (the too-earnest singing with the guitar leads that sound like police sirens) can be aggravating, but it's pop music, right? The "dynamic" sudden stops and "whoas" don't help. If you're a happy li'l feller, pick this up. (JP)
(Goodwill, CP 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY, www.goodwillrecords.net)

**LIVING HELL – "Pavor Nocturnis" EP**
From the opening riff, I knew this New England band had the INTEGRITY thing *down*. Not quite their *Humanity is The Devil* apex, but I wouldn't hesitate to say it's in league with *Systems Overload*. If that means nothing to you, think about that point where something is still hardcore, but if you tweaked one tiny little thing, it would tip the balance and become simply a metal record. There are lots of breakdowns, lots of solos, and plenty of blood, sweat, and bile. This is an angry-ass record. Pretty good. (JU)
(Lockin Out, 21 Mount Vernon St, Brighton, MA 02135, www.lockinout.com)

**LOST CAUSE – "Kill What's Inside" LP**
Ten unrelenting tracks of blown-out, burly, full-throttle crust from Philadelphia, seared with distinct Japanese influences in the form of blazing guitar leads, epic intros, and punchy vocal back-ups. The lyrical direction is similar to the Burning Spirits style and touches on the personal struggle and the fight for daily existence. The vocals slather more than the deep-end bark of Japanese hardcore but copy the growling punctuation a la FORWARD or TETSU AREI, book-ending the tumultuous chaos. Recorded with enough balance between clarity and distortion, this is a solid record with good variation and combination of influences, proficiently delivered at top speed. Also, this band features members from RAMBO, WITCH HUNT and other Philly bands. Ace! (KS)
(Love the Music, Hate the Scene, c/o Mitchell Brochu, PO Box 37271, Philadelphia, PA 19148)

**LOST HANDS FOUND FINGERS – "Live Hard Hold Fast" CD**
This band sounds like they just picked up the Victory Records sampler from 2000. Three-to-four-minute pop punk songs filled with heartfelt lyrics, metal leads, and the occasional screaming to really get across the intensity of emotion. Cliché lyrics that you can never really figure out what they are talking about, but sound so profound. (PL)
(www.myspace.com/sacredplague)

**LOUTISH – "Total Devastation" EP**
I had to look this name up, 'cuz I thought "What the fuck is a LOUTISH?" It is a dumb or awkward person—just thought I would save you the Google search. This band has listened to quite a bit of Scandi-soaked hardcore punk and these nine tracks tell us just that. Canada has been churning out a recent crop of bands that are playing up the Swedish styles and they are doing a good job of it. A good EP to listen to if you have memorized every MOB 47 tune ever and are still craving that sound. (MS)
(Torture Garden)

**LUDLOW – "Gold Paint" EP**
LUDLOW is a Pittsburgh, PA based trio that includes members or THE PAYTOILETS, THE 1985, and SUGAR SHACK. This debut release is a heavy noise-rock bit falling in among the current resurgence of drugged-out, shakes-having, sweaty, scumbag AmRep wanna-be bands. And it's good. Four songs that range from sped-up, meth-head, lost-guitar spew to slower, sludged-out, bass-heavy, COWS downers. This is dirty rock inspired by a dirty time. (AL)
(www.theludlowsound.com)

**MANNEQUIN MEN – "Private School/ Sewers"**
There was a time in the '90s when every band wanted to sound like a sloppy, drugged-out JOHNNY THUNDERS clone. Well, I hope we aren't expecting a reprise of those "glory" days. Here we have two slow, lethargic rock songs. The apathetic singer can barely speak the words into the microphone. I imagine him laying on floor of his apartment/the studio while he records these vocals. Too slow for me. (CK)
(Criminal IQ, 3501 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, criminaliq@hotmail.com)

**MANNEQUIN MEN / SHOPPING – split EP**
MANNEQUIN MEN sound like a bunch of *Onion* readers who love THE STROKES and college humor equally. I guess maybe they are probably more into THE BLACK LIPS and *Vice* magazine. It's music for frat parties full of people who all look like Urban Outfitters models rather than Abercrombie ones. SHOPPING has a horrible band name. At first, I thought the singer was a girl for some reason. His voice reminded me of THE MUFFS, but actually I think it's probably more Chrisser from the PEECHEES or maybe Peter Perrett from THE ONLY ONES. It's garage-y, but what isn't nowadays? Definitely registered on the poser meter. (LG)
(Do The Math, 2236 N. Sawyer #1, Chicago, IL 60647, www.dothemathrecords.com)

**MASSMORD – "Unleashed" LP**
On their second LP there's a bit more refinement to this Swedish band's blasting metallic

D-beat hardcore—mainly through flourished guitar leads and tasteful (but seemingly obligatory in modern European hardcore) millennium-crust styled moments. The twelve tracks on *Unleashed* retain MASSMORD's raw, speeding urgency and unrelenting upbeat momentum, their fine sheen of distortion, and trademark scathing-male/wicked-female vocal tradeoffs. The lyrics are in Swedish and English and attack industrialization, war, capitalism, and corporate influence in our daily lives. Curiously, there is an anti-voting song followed by another that decries the rise of the elected racist right-wing in Sweden. While I share their pessimism about real change achieved through voting—racists, the KKK, and the national front *always* vote, so in my book it's worth the time to vote just to cancel one of those fuckers out. Cool LP! (KS)
(Contrast, c/o Grehn, Einhardstr 5, 50937 Koln, GERMANY, www.contrast.de)

**MILLOY – "More Than a Machine" LP**
This record's a couple of years old, although this might be its first outing on (gorgeous, red splatter) vinyl. MILLOY play meaty melodic hardcore that would be at home on No Idea. Think AVAIL, HOT WATER MUSIC, etc., but with the distinctly English flavor you'd expect from lads reared on LEATHERFACE and SNUFF. If that's got your taste-buds tingling, navigate your browser to... (AM)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London SW9 6FE, UNITED KINGDOM, www.householdnamerecords.co.uk)

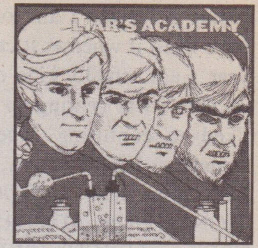
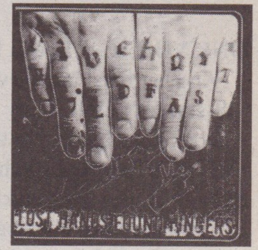
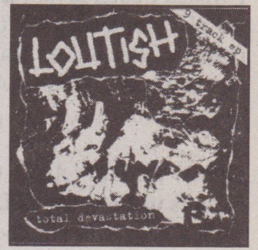
**JOHNNY MOPED – "The Johnny Moped Bootleg Tapes Volumes I and II" 2xLP**
I have a bunch of band's demo cassettes that I have collected over the years, most of which never have, nor probably ever will be released on vinyl, but god I love them. This JOHNNY MOPED collection reminds me of those. While the average person would never listen to something as rough as this, I have never had a problem seeing through the recording limitations to appreciate the talent, fun, and insanity behind it. Why would I ever want to hear something generic ever again? JOHNNY MOPED may be a bit crazy, but he sure is entertaining. Collected here are two different cassette tapes recorded in the '70s. There are songs recorded at home and at shows, some spoken-word, a bit where Johnny ad-libs while starting a moped ("Starting a Moped"), and an interview from Radio Leeds. THE DAMNED's Captain Sensible plays guitar, bass, organ, and "suitcase" on some tracks, as well as helped write some songs. This collection may not be for the ordinary record listener, but if you're crazy like me you'll love it. (CK)
(Damaged Goods, PO Box 45854. London EII IYX, UNITED KINGDOM, damagedgoods.co.uk)

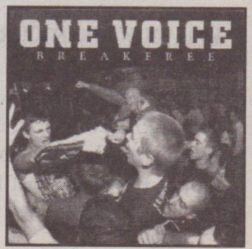
**THE MUGWUMPS – "Banana Brain" LP**
As Charles Bronson might say: There are three leather jackets; inside the leather jackets there are three men; between the men and the leather jackets are BEATNIK TERMITES, GROOVIE GHOULIES, and RIVERDALES T-shirts. No HEAD tees were available. This should be enjoyable for those who don't feel the RAMONES teabag has lost most of its flavor. (DD)
(Bachelor, 5421 Adnet 186, AUSTRIA, www.bachelorrecords.com)

**NASHGUL – "Humanicidio" CD**
Crimes Against Humanity Gives us the collected works (so far) of Spain's grind fuckers that go by the moniker NASHGUL. Violent outburst attack style, with vocals weaving between gut-wrenching screams and sub-human growls. Lyrics with a social/political bent and some B-grade horror movie sound-bites thrown in (*Night of the Living Dead 6*?) makes this essential. Of course, early NAPALM DEATH, CARCASS, REPULSION, and even new bloods like INSECT WARFARE come to mind if one needs to compare. 31 tracks and five visual nuggets to feast upon. You need this…now thrash!!! (JH)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702)

**NEVERENDING PARTY / THE REACTION – split EP**
NEVERENDING PARTY was one of the best bands to come out of the East Bay in recent years. With the inimitable vocals of Corbett of BOBBY JOE EBOLA AND THE CHILDREN MACNUGGITS fame, and the Bob Mould-ian stylings of Naters (of BENT OUTTA SHAPE...and the fuckin' SIX PACK FOUR!) on guitar, this band started out as a CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL cover band and quickly evolved into an awesome thing of their own, which does indeed sound like CCR meets HÜSKER DÜ meets BOBBY JOE EBOLA. This split features what I thought were their two best tunes, each one unique and memorable, with the perfect balance of melodic guitar and vox and the solid, punk-as-fuck rhythm section of newcomer bassist Lauren and veteran drummer Megan March (ex-BEFORE THE FALL, SIX PACK FOUR). So sad to see this band go. THE REACTION is the latest band from veteran Texas/SF wild man Wade Driver (ex-HICKOIDS, 50 MILLION, and a world famous square dance caller!). Wade sings and plays guitar on the first tune, a slower dirge-y rocker with some melody and headbangability, with great help from genius drummer Willy (of another great local band, WILDILDLIFE). Bassist Liz takes vocals on the second track, another slow/mid tempo tune that has a unique feel to it, almost like TALKING HEADS gone grunge on ludes. OK, it's impossible to describe THE REACTION 'cause they don't fit into any mold. An admirable quality held by both bands on this EP. The insert is awesome too, with written pieces by every band member on the record, providing even more entertainment for your hard-earned buck. Get this! (PC)
(Thrillhouse, PO Box 460207, San Francisco, CA 94146)

**OLDE GHOST – "Echo" EP**
I totally liked this. It reminded me of DRIVE LIKE JEHU-era hardcore. In fact, it is very and entirely reminiscent of DRIVE LIKE JEHU. I had this feeling that I was not going to be into this record at all. For some reason I thought it was going to be screamo, or worse, emo-violence, but no, it's actually a total DRIVE LIKE JEHU



tribute band and I am totally into it. I would have liked it whether it came out in '94 or last year. I am actually kind of at a loss for words because I was gearing up to hate, but instead, I liked—a confusing experience leading to a somewhat boring review. OLDE GHOST features ex-members of BOOKS LIE, THE FICTION, YOUR ADVERSARY, YUM YUM TREE, and EXCITEBIKE. (LG)
(Rok Lok, PO Box 137, Rocky Pt, New York 11778, www.roklokrecords.com)

**ONE VOICE – "Break Free" EP**

Another band in the (very) long line of fast, '88-styled youth crew hardcore bands to emerge from Europe in the last decade-and-a-half—this Belgian band has a ferocity that a lot of these clones lack, making it stand out as one of the better Euro-edge bands I've heard. There is zero ground being broken here, but they know what they're doing and they do it well. Psyched I got a reviewer copy as I will probably play this quite a bit. (JU)
(Crucial Response, Kaisersfeld 98, 46047 Oberhausen, GERMANY, www.crucial response.com)

**ONLY FUMES AND CORPSES – "Read What's in Between" CD**

Southern Ireland doesn't exactly have a legacy of raging hardcore bands, so it was a real surprise to get this rip-roaring disc. Eight songs of explosive hardcore with super heavy production. In the same world as bands like ENDSTAND or even early REFUSED with swirling guitar leads and hoarse vocals, but adding the down-tuned heaviness of FROM ASHES RISE. This is one of the best European hardcore records I've heard in ages...The lyrics are a little simplistic, but the music is hammering. Track this down. (TB)
(myspace.com/onlyfumesandcorpses)

**OUR WAY OF LIFE – "Fear City" CD**

This is your basic hardcore/street-punk played by scary-looking Midwestern skinheads. In other words, it fits somewhere in between DILLINGER 4 and SHEER TERROR, but not nearly as good as either of those. If songs about patriotism, hating hippies, "skinhead drama," and the working class appeal to you, then check these guys out. (CC)
(Nail Wall, PO Box 481, Blue Island, IL 60406)

**PATEANDO PORKERIA – "La Revolución No Tiene Restre" CD**

Riff-heavy alternative rock a la HELMET, RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE, etc., interspersed with short bursts of hardcore. It's all in Spanish, but from what I can gather this group feels very passionate about leftist politics. Musically, this is pretty divorced from anything that regular *MRR* readers would want any part in. I guess at a stretch you could reference THE REFUSED, but this band is way less imaginative than even that. (AM)
(Pateando Porkeria, Apdo. 6394, Bilbao, SPAIN, pateandoporkeria@hushmail.com)

**PEABODYS / STEINWAYS – split EP**

It took me a few minutes longer to review this record than expected because I had to go and order me a copy of this fine split 7" before I could start writing. What we have here, folks, is two bands playing that type of pop punk that appeals to nerds, geeks, dorks, and other subgroups that jocks (and their wannabe hardcore metalhead brethren) generally like to make fun of. This is pop punk that would appeal to fans of power pop and the more poppy, less punk second records by lots of '70s punk bands. The STEINWAYS songs tend to be the more sarcastic of the two, with a little gravel in the vocals and proof that some good bands still exist in NYC. The PEABODYS remind me more of some of the slower MODERNETTES numbers or other Vancouver power punk bands. Good stuff, so go order this from... (JF)
(Incessant Drip, 3510 SE Sherry Ln #7, Milwaukie, OR 97222)

**PECHBLENDE – "Collapse" CD**

Melodramatic crust-core riffage augmented with diluted WIPERS or JEHU-esque guitar parodies. Vocals are straightforward and throaty with impressive (or off-putting, depending on your school of thought) similar phrasing song to song. Evidently striving for quantity, or an epicness, *Collapse* ends up seeming real drawn-out and flat-lined. Songs range in endurance levels from three to five minutes per track of remarkably average-sounding mid-tempo "just the tip game" riffs that never get to the (excuse me for a moment) ball-banging good stuff that bands of this sub-genre need to distinguish themselves from the throngs of other folks dabbling from the exact same played-out influences. Hit the snooze. (BS)
(Tuned To You, www.tunedtoyou.com)

**PHOENIX BODIES – "Too Much Information" CD**

Wow. I had never heard these guys before, and this being their discography I was pretty overwhelmed by it all—comes with an extra DVD and everything! These guys play spastic but brutal screaming HC grind that is quirky and certainly amusing. Song titles like "Cock Ocean: A Timeless Destination" and "Pardon My Emoticon" will leave you perplexed and/or amused. Great! (NM)
(Shove, Via Don Minzoni 3, 15100 Alessandria, ITALY)

**THE PLEASURES OF MERELY CIRCULATING – CD**

A gal-fronted band with some amateur charm. The vocals sound a little like the YEAH YEAH YEAHS and the music is a mix of SLANT 6 and BABES IN TOYLAND. This is OK as the songs don't really grab me but this is proudly not MTV-bound. Think noisy 1988 indie rock. (RL)
(Ettabelle, www.ettabelle.com)

**POISON CONTROL – "The Violent Years" EP**

It's really unfortunate that POISON CONTROL has already broken up 'cos this record is great. Some driving and catchy mid-tempo hardcore punk is played within the grooves of this record. The riffs are bouncy and infectious and the two guitars keep the sound nice and thick. I think POISON CONTROL is coincidental kindred spirits with BRAIN HANDLE. Both bands have a similar sound and delivery. The dirge-y "Nervosa" reminds me of some of BRAIN HANDLE's slower moments. POISON CONTROL will definitely appeal to fans of the retro HC punk revival but I think they have more personality and style than a lot the bands in that genre. (CI)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

**PROJECT MAYHEM – "No Rest for the Wicked" CD**

The singer's warbling sometimes brings TSOL to mind, which must be a good thing for some folks out there but not for me. Music is Oz-style slab punkish hard rawk or hard rawkish punk, though they call it "gonzo rock." I'll give them this much: the CDs that come through here these days seem to be remarkably worse than the vinyl and, while this is no exception, it's much less egregious than most of the CDs I've had to review lately. (DD)
(PO Box 8184, Subiaco East, WA 6010 AUSTRALIA, myspace.com/projectmayhemperth)

**THE PROSTHETICS – "Count It" EP**

Fuck! You hardcore punks better hold on to your skulls! THE PROSTHETICS, from the Phoenix, Arizona area, has come to deliver a severe bruising. The wound-up-tight hardcore music burns your fucking ears off! The lyrics admonish you to get out! Out from under the thumb of the capitalist warmongers who rule society! THE PROSTHETICS smash through "Daily Grind," "War Cry," "Save Your Breath...It's Life or Death," and "Controlled Demolition." Every song is fast and tight! The guitarist hammers you with metal-laced riffs. The songs implore you to rise up against the loss of individual rights and the brainwashing by the media. This excellent thrash band expresses strong feelings about government's

control of the people! Listen to these accomplished hardcore punks give their opinion about a possible sway out of these troubled times! (BR)
($5 ppd: Organized Crime, PO Box 213, Brookfield, IL 60513, www.organizedcrimerecords.com)

**PUNCH IN THE FACE – "At War with Everybody" LP**
This is quite a departure from the Boston hardcore sound found on their EPs. I suppose one can't depart *too* much from the confines of an early '80s hardcore sound, but as compared to their earlier material, PUNCH IN THE FACE definitely bring a lot more hooks, plenty of MOTÖRHEAD guitar leads, and an overall better approach to songwriting. In the end, this sounds a lot less like NEGATIVE FX and a lot more like early KILL YOUR IDOLS (especially with Ebro's vocals). I am pretty sure this is the third release that I have reviewed by this band, and I can honestly say that it is their most memorable. (CC)
(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes St, San Francisco, CA 94117)

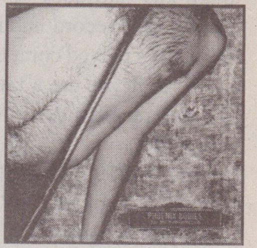
**RADON – "Metric Buttloads of Rock" LP**
Truth be told, I'd never listened to this band before. Well, maybe I'd heard some split EP that came with No Idea zine or something. But I'd never paid attention. They broke up back in 1856 or something but got back together for The Fest. Everyone always talks about The Fest as if you should just know what they're on about. I finally figured out it's some No Idea-related get-together in Gainesville, Florida where people drink every day for like a month solid and go and see their favorite bands from Japan play in a coffee shop but the next day all they can remember is getting wasted with Davey TILTWHEEL. I've never been and probably never will. I hate Florida. Now I'm listening to RADON for possibly the first time and kicking myself for avoiding them for so long. RADON is one of the few modern bands that understand the HÜSKER DÜ rule: it doesn't matter how "melodic" your lead guitar lines are if you can't write (and sing) a fucking song. To whit, the guitars here are fairly pedestrian but they *feel* melodic because the songs are written that way. OK, I've got some revisiting to do. (AM)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

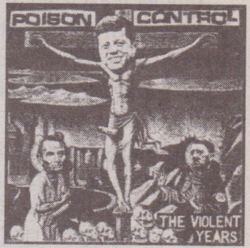
**RAMPAGE – "Limit of Destruction" LP**
Musically speaking, this is pretty much what you've come to expect from Lockin' Out records: late '80s New York City inspired hardcore written by and for dudes. I am usually a sucker for anything that sounds like a faster version of BREAKDOWN, but I wasn't a fan of their EP, and I'm certainly not a fan of this. For starters, their attempt at a crossover sound by putting a ton of reverb on the snare sounds like shit. Second, the words "faggots" and "pussies" are used in a chorus to describe (from what I can tell) people of the upper class. At least there are no songs about weight-lifting this time around…no wait, I take that back. The words "cardio" and "weights" are definitely used in a song entitled "Physical Therapy." Ouch. (CC)
(Lockin' Out, 21 Mount Vernon St, Brighton, MA 02135, www.lockinout.com)

**RED HANDED – "Wounds Remain" CD**
This is the way I like modern hardcore—full of power without going metal, and staying traditional without completely aping a particular era or band. The antagonism displayed in both the damaged vocals and the powerful force of guitars and drums will have you clenching your fist and wanting to sing along. Influence ranges anywhere from BLACK FLAG to Bridge Nine. This is the kind of shit you can listen to on headphones while walking the streets and fall into an incensed tunnel vision mentality that can get out of hand. You know what I mean? You start walking faster, you feel a bit more aggressive than usual, and then sometimes you embarrassingly catch yourself snarling and making fists in the air? As much as I dig this, I do have a couple of bones to pick. First, is the umpteenth frickin' cover of "My Rules" by VOID. I know it's a great song, but there're so many lesser-known songs that beg to be covered instead. And also, as with many other "angry" hardcore bands out there, I wish there would be a little variety of what it is exactly that makes you so pissed all the time. I mean, is it always getting fucked over, or are there other things in the world? Fuck man, I get pissed all the time, but a lot of it goes beyond my personal issues. That aside, this still rips and I'm keeping this one! (BG)
(Rivalry, PO Box 5242, Concord, CA 94524, www.rivalryrecords.com)

**REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH / THE SKUDS – split EP**
SKUDS side first. I can't believe how blazing this is!! From the band name and the look of the record, which is by no means bad, I was expecting some sort of spiky-topped street punk, and what I got was a dose of totally over-the-top, fast-as-fuck, thrashy crust hardcore, made all the more devastating by the fuzzy-yet-pounding production. What a pleasant surprise. As far as the REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH side…I don't want to insult this by calling it screamo, but that's its closest relative. Maybe emo-violence is more appropriate with their likeness to fellow Southeasterners IN/HUMANITY. It's got quiet, noodle-y parts that break open into fast, crazy, discordant chaotic parts. Not bad, but I prefer the SKUDS side. (JU)
(self-released, no address)

**RIOT SQUAD – "Prosecute the Weak, Control the Strong" CD**
Nineteen tracks of chugga chugga UK hardcore. These Mansfield mugs have been around the block and know what's what and while others chase fashion trends they're sticking to what they know: straightforward no-frills punk rock, throwing in a couple of unexpected covers—WIRE and BLACK FLAG. Unfortunately there's something not quite grabbing me about the tunes. Not as tedious as most Oi! but lacking the spark that takes something from generic hardcore to something special. If you like THE EXPLOITED or later GBH you will probably like this. (AM)
($11 ppd: Suicide Circle, c/o Paul Palmer, 4 Myrtle Close, Shirebrook, Mansfield, Notts NG20 8HD, UNITED KINGDOM, www.riotsquad.co.uk)





**SABOTEUR – "A Neverending Bore" EP**

Fast and thrashy hardcore from Sweden, although SABOTEUR sings in English and this was released on a US label. These guys play super-fast and mostly straightforward with the occasional metal lick and breakdown thrown in for good measure. The lyrics are written from a personal/political bent and touch on ageless punk topics such as war, gentrification, government oppression, and shitty tough-guy attitudes in the hardcore scene. Overall, this record is fairly typical for thrashy HC but it's played competently and with enthusiasm, so if you are a fan of this style you will like this record…definitely not a neverending bore. (CI)

($5 ppd US/$9 ppd world: Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**SAHN MARU – "Never Too Late" CD**

Another great band to represent the Bay Area punk scene, SAHN MARU delivers ten blazing, Swedish crust-influenced tracks that are way above average for this kind of genre. I like the bands that lean more towards the hardcore punk side of things and less towards the metal, and thank ol' Bog above that these guys do just that! Musically, I'd say the sound is heavily influenced by SCORCHED EARTH POLICY, TOTALITÄR, and maybe even a bit of UNITED MUTATION. The lyrics are pretty damn great, overall, with some thoughtful reflections on how the human mammal is destroying our beloved planet. But all is not doom and gloom here, as a few songs about friendship and love even things out a bit. And those songs are pretty sincere in the sense that we need love to survive all the other bullshit. I can't believe this much power comes from a three-piece band! (BG)

(Inimical, PO Box 2803, Seattle, WA 98111, www.inimical.com)

**SCHLEPPHODEN – "Ultima Ratio" LP**

A German punk band that fuses Deutschpunk with heavy metal. Does that sound wrong? It is! Hey, I love German punk, I just can't stand metal. My biggest complaint is that the shitty metal guitars have drowned out the vocalist! Fuck! Her voice sounds cool and is the best thing about this record, but I can barely hear her. There were a few songs that were getting somewhere but lost it for me. I am sure this is a fun band to watch live but something about this record bugs me. Production? Metal guitars? Everyone wearing camo shorts? Hmm, I am not sure. (MS)

(Arschkarte, a-karte-records@gmx.de)

**THE SERVICE GROUP – "Principles of Electronic Circuitry" CD**

This band used to share a member with BIG IN JAPAN, and while I am not sure it still does, it still has the sonic connection. For while, BIG IN JAPAN worshipped at the altar of early ELVIS COSTELLO, and THE SERVICE GROUP's sound is from a couple of albums later in his career, maybe *Trust*-era with a nod to SQUEEZE or XTC. Now I know what some of you are saying—those records ain't punk—but to me they always were. And while *Principles* may be to pop or mod for some of you, to me it is one fine CD. Good stuff. (JF)

(Squid vs. Whale, PO Box 11252, Portland, OR 97211)

**SHAPEEN!! – CD**

SHAPEEN!! plays simple, driving melodic punk rock that has a timeless quality. This is not the SNUFF-meets-CRIMPSHRINE pop-core of the Snuffy Smiles bands; it's more like RAMONES meets BAD POSTURE, if you can imagine that. There are some slower ballad-type songs thrown in just to make things more interesting, but for the most part this is totally rockin', head boppin', leather-clad Japanese punk rock. (PC)

(Radiator, www.shapeen.com)

**SIBERIA – "In Exile" LP**

A mysterious release with little info or contact info. The first thing I did with this LP was look at the artwork for a good while. Black, silver, and dark blue and a vague skull with silver candles coming out of the eyes. The band and LP name are on ribbon of paper about three inches wide wrapped around the sleeve. Then I pull out the record and it's white with no text in the center, just a hammer and sickle. I had no idea what to expect, but my listening experience had already been colored in a positive way before I even dropped the needle. Oh, what does the band sound like? That's my job, right? Heavy hardcore with emo leanings and a blast-beat every once in a while. Their sound is fairly eclectic; hell, the last song on side A has a very metal, twin guitar riff. Actually a lot of this looks and feels like black metal but it's really metal-leaning hardcore with some emo thrown in. It reminds me a little of COALESCE. It says Oliver, Andre and RC are the band and it was recorded in Portland. I did a bunch of searching online and found out the band is from Portland, OR and is most of the members of MORSE CODE HEARTBEAT. (MH)

(self-released, no address)

**SIGNS OF HOPE – "First and Foremost" EP**

Like most current "amazing-core" bands, this band made sure to get plenty of friends together and shout slogans like "Getting Stronger Everyday" on the recording. They even put crew parts in bold on the lyric sheet so you know when to shout their lyrics at the top of your lungs at home. Musically, SIGNS OF HOPE reminds me of recent bands like OVER MY DEAD BODY and CHAMPION—fast verses and choruses with lots melodic leads and *lots* of crew vocals. Most of the lyrical content deals with the concept of not growing older and it being OK as long as you have hardcore. (PL)

(Goodwill, CP 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, ITALY, www.goodwillrecords.net)

**SIMBIOSE – "Evolution?" CD**

SIMBIOSE is a long-standing Portuguese HC punk band, with this fine release being on MCR. I have heard these guys in the past and thought they were pretty good but this is the best stuff I have heard by them by leaps and bounds. There are definite D-beat and crust influences, which weren't quite as pronounced as I had remembered, and even some metal thrown in. Excellent cover artwork too! (NM)

(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

**SLEEPWALKERS R.I.P. – "Play Our Sound" EP**

Portland punk! It's got that dark Northwest sound for sure, and it's actual punk! Featuring ex-members of THE TRIGGERS playing straight-ahead and snarly, with snotty girl vocals, doomy guitars, and clattering drums. It's so much better than anything I've had to listen to so far… I think you might like it if you were into, say, THE BAGS, or just good-time bad-time punk rock. The lyrics are smart and mean too. (LG)

(Dead Ideas, PO Box 851, Austin, TX 78767)

**SMALL ARMS DEALER – "Patron Saint of Disappointment" CD**

It is fitting that this record was recorded by one of the guys in LATTERMAN, because SMALL ARMS DEALER sounds like a more melodic, less shouted version of said band. Poppy, bouncy punk music with touch of '90s melodic Jersey hardcore (e.g. LIFETIME) is what we have here. The nice thing is right when this CD starts to feel a little generic, S.A.D. throws in a touch of mid-'90s DC breakdowns that always hook this reviewer. Awesome and a band I would love to see live. (JF)

(Deep Elm, www.deepelm.com)

**SOCIALCIDE – "Burn in Hell, Bundy" EP**

I am always stoked when a band like this comes out. SOCIALCIDE plays fast hardcore in the key of early-'80s—dirty sounding guitars and hollow production. In other words, they got it right. The band is out of Virginia, but not Richmond! They make that very clear

in the song "Follow the Herd," which sounds like it is about someone who moved from their beloved suburb to Richmond ("Trend City"). A part of the new wave of bands coming out on No Way Records and Grave Mistake, and although they are not on either of those labels, you should seriously check this out if you're into that stuff. (PL)
(Even Worse/Kangaroo, www.geocities.com/evenworse, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

**SOUL CONTROL – "Involution" CD**

The one-sheet cites BURN, BANE, QUICKSAND, 108, and INTO ANOTHER as influences for this band/album and for once I agree with the one-sheet—especially the QUICKSAND and BURN references. Think mid-tempo, groove-driven heavy rock that was once considered "hardcore" and probably is again. Goddamn, this is so "It's 1992, my parents drove me and my friends to the city and we're going to a show at the Middle East to see DALTONIC, DIVE, and EYE FOR AN EYE." I actually find quite a bit of nostalgia and comfort in this album but I doubt it has very much "mass appeal." I can't believe how much the '90s have been reborn this year in pop and underground culture. If you told me in January that bands were going to sound like BURN and JESUS LIZARD, and that I would like them I would have ante'd that if you were right I would give you my DEEP WOUND 7". Thank Allah I didn't! This is great but I shouldn't like it at all. Hopefully fools don't start trying to sound like SPLIT LIP again. Wish I knew where my BURN longsleeve was now. "We have killed and shall be judged!" (JU)
(Rivalry, PO Box 5242, Concord, CA 94524, www.rivalryrecords.com)

**STUKAS OVER BEDROCK – "Back to the Stone Age" LP**

I confess to being insufficiently geek-ish to have been previously acquainted with STUKAS OVER BEDROCK and their 1984 *Life Like Yogi* EP, but the fourteen songs on here (including the three from aforementioned EP) are almost all high-grade unrepentant-dumbass-youngsters-having-fun punk. Their version of "Careful With That Axe Eugene" goofs on both PINK FLOYD and the formula hardcore tide that they seemed to have been shoveling sand against. (DD)
(Punk, www.punkrecords.com)

**TAXI – "Dead Girl" EP**

I'm not sure what to make of this. It's catchy. I suppose it's punk rock. Or maybe not. At any rate, they seem to take themselves a little too seriously. The singer, in particular, gets a little too dramatic at times. When you're doing this in a language that is not your native language, this can sound just plain silly. And the pic sleeve, with a decapitated doll, is a bit much. (KK)
(Hellnation, Via Nomentana 113, 00161, Rome, ITALY)

**TEENAGE FRAMES – "Junkie Logic" CD**

A four-song EP from this SoCal band. This is punky rock 'n' roll circa 1976. A little SWEET, a little KINKS, and a little NEW YORK DOLLS. This also has an unnamed track that is a cover of COCKSPARRER's "Chip On My Shoulder." (RL)
(www.teenageframes.com)

**TEENERS – "Hit Me" EP**

The MOTARDS sure left quite a legacy of dick-in-a-blender bands. These wackos, probably also from Texas or some southernly place, not only carry the torch, they set the homeless on fire with it. The only word I could make out on all four songs is "Waaaahhhh!" Also, my 45-thingee was loose and I didn't even notice till the second song on the side. It's that good. Speaking of 45's, "Ms. 45" is the standout—you can almost make out the dry heaving coming through the guitar pickup. I can't fucking wait to see these people live. (JP)
($4 ppd: Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

**THANK GOD / TIGERSHARK – split 10"**

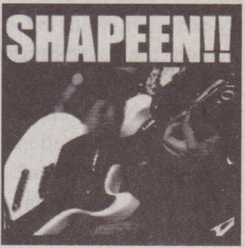
I like MOSS ICON but they inspired a total sea of shit. THANK GOD falls in that category. With songs like "I Will Die in Paris" and "That Crazy Mouse Is Cool" these guys aren't exactly breaking any ground or saying anything worthwhile and then the last song is called "Wasting My Breath." Yep, you got that right. This is utter crap and the name is awful—if it's meant to be ironic then it is worse than awful. TIGER SHARK picks up the pace. On the first two songs they are more akin to something like THREE STUDIES FOR A CRUCIFIXION or ONE-EYED GOD PROPHECY. The last song has a later FUGAZI jam-out weirdness feel. Sorry guys, but I'm not quite ready for a '90s revival. (CI)
(The Perpetual Motion Machine, no address)

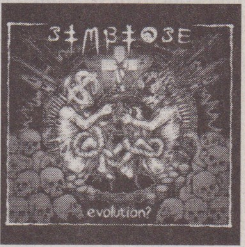
**TIME TO ESCAPE – "Mr. Popular" EP**

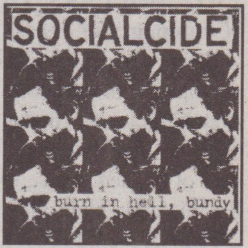
What does it tell you when a record is already on its second pressing before we even a get a freakin' chance to review the thing here at *MRR*? And what does it tell you when the record is on the sanctified Grave Mistake label? That's right, another fucking classic that any self-respecting hardcore punk must obtain immediately! TIME TO ESCAPE plays traditional hardcore with total youth angst and aggression, with lots of good tempo changes and great vocals. I would say they dwell somewhere between old Dischord hardcore and early youth crew stuff (without the crew!). The lyrics deal with stupid frat boys, wasting life in school only to get a career, living in a shitty town, and how a drug addict ruins the family. This is perfect hardcore, and a few extra points go to the boys for carrying on the fine tradition of naming your band in homage to an older punk band. Seriously, this record is needed by you. Now. (BG)
(Grave Mistake, PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistake.com)

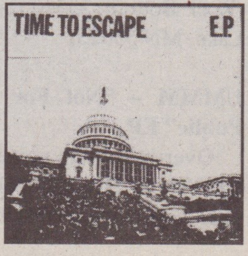
**TOTAL ABUSE – "Sex Pig" EP**

Ex-SNOBS kick down a pretty ferocious debut EP. Plenty of talk about these folks and they have lived up to the hype. Mining the same territory as bands like WASTED TIME and GOVERNMENT WARNING, TOTAL ABUSE have both feet firmly planted in the '80s, but what sets them apart is the über-raw production and a





crazed, out-of-control element to their sound. Coming off like a lost DEEP WOUND demo or some of the more ferocious JERRY'S KIDS tracks, this is stirring stuff. If you are down with the thrash revival revival, you ought to check these guys out. (TB)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

**TRASSELS – "Mindbreak Motel" CD**

I hate X. I hate the pissing-in-my-ears "harmonies" and the jive-ass, phony-as-fuck country-ness. Oh wait, by song three, these puds change their aspirations to being the next BLUR—another timely winner. You know what this horseshit is, in a nutshell? Music your ex likes. If you need *me* to tell you that something called *Mindbreak Motel* sucks, I can't do nothing for you, man. Almost as relevant as FASTBALL. The only thing that makes me smile is, upon hearing how overproduced it is, knowing that they spent lots and lots of money and ended up with this, and that the TEENERS probably spent 47 cents on their 45 and shat out a diamond. Take that, Finland! (JP)
(Wanton, www.wantonrecords.net)

**EL TRONO DE JUDAS – "Gube Kabuz ala Hil" CD**

Spanish political punk. It's fast, it's angry, and it's boring the hell outta me. (AD)
(DDT/Gatazka, www.ddtgatazka.com)

**TWO DOLLARS OUT THE DOOR – "Champagne of Fears" LP**

This two-man band from SF takes a drums-and-bass configuration, pairs it with vocals stretching across football fields, and when all that's crumpled up into a spit wad, it makes for a lot of twisted, black, rhythmic-drenched goo. It's this dark, controlled mess that helps TWO DOLLARS OUT THE DOOR fit in perfectly with today's art-damaged spastic music sect. You can't deny the sometimes dubbed-out sounds that the coughed-up, echoed-for-years-on-end vocals, wild drumming, and bass heavy meanderings translate to. Don't get me wrong—*Champagne of Fears* has got some oompf and speed behind it as well. The sleeve is hand-screened and glows in the dark, and the vinyl is splattered colored and limited to 500. This is the soundtrack to destination-less bike riding nights through the Mission or the TL or wherever. Well, whatever, I just want a 40 now. (AL)
(Rock Bottom, 25510 East Comfort Dr, Forest Lake, MN 55025)

**UMMM – "Not For Distribution to the Public" EP**

Over-in-a-blur powerviolence from the CROSSED OUT school, though lacking the utter negativity of that band. 19 "songs" that annoyingly play from inside to out on the vinyl, which will inevitably lead to the needle falling off the end of the record should I ever choose to listen to this again. The cover is minimal—all black with the song titles and lyrics in white—but we were also sent a limited-to-50 version, which is literally a color xerox of the STATEMENT *Prepare For Battle* (on Hardline Records) sleeve with the band's name crossed out and "UMMM" written underneath…on the inside they blacked out all the lyrics except the words "you" and "fuck." All this screams "joke band" but the lyrics are actually seem to deal with serious topics. Not really my thing, but I'll at least say it's better than the average "wacky thrash" band. (CS)
(Matthew Hafel, 1520 11th Ave. SW, Calgary, AB, T3C 0M9, CANADA, ummmviolence@hotmail.com)

**UNDER PRESSURE – "Black Bile" LP**

The most recent lineup of Winnipeg's UNDER PRESSURE shows a hardcore sensibility bound with dark, punk tonalities. The flailing guitars bring late BLACK FLAG to mind, perhaps with a dose of WIPERS. "Whit and Rein" captures the feel best: serious, speedy, and almost troubling. The swirling HC rhythms are striking, even without the vocals—a sound that grows on you—and maybe it's intentional that we don't have a lyric sheet so we can concentrate on the complex rhythms. (SS)
(Fashionable Idiots, PO Box 58031, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

**UNDER PRESSURE – "Come Clean" LP**

I was really interested in checking this out; I caught Winnipeg's UNDER PRESSURE open a show in San Francisco last month and was really impressed. Maybe it was my overly high expectations, but *Come Clean* was kind of a let-down. At times, the band is going for a dark, melodic, mid-tempo sound, not entirely dissimilar from some of the later BORN DEAD ICONS' material, but the vocalist ruins it with that stylized Japanese-hardcore delivery. The faster stuff is a little better though, and I wouldn't say this LP is entirely without its moments ("One in One," "Suspension," "Tranquilizer"). I like what this band is going for; I just don't think they quite achieve it. Maybe next time? I'll still be paying attention, and in the meantime I'll be lucky enough to catch them live again. (CS)
(Primitive Air-Raid, www.primitiveairraid.com)

**UNHOLY GRAVE / VÖETSEK – split 5"**

OK, I have to admit straight off that the novelty and cuteness factor of a 5" record has me swayed from the start, but the solid batch of songs on here really sweetens the deal. The Japanese grind masters UNHOLY GRAVE have put out a dizzying amount of material (like over 40 splits). Their side has just one ripping song that was recorded in a pretty lo-fi style; lots of fuzzy surface noise but it sounds good anyway. VÖETSEK doesn't usually do it for me recorded because Ami's vocals are so much more brutal live, but their side of this split sounded good. I was particularly into the trade-off gang vocals at the end of the second song. Good shit. (AA)
(Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710, hauntedhotelrecs@yahoo.com)

**THE VATICANS – "Guardia Svizzera Pontificia" CD**

This is pure pop gold—there's no messing around with a tried-and-tested formula, sticking to the simple hooks and harmonies that makes this classic sound…well, so damn classic. Taking in the poppier moments of the late-'70s heyday of power and bubble gum pop, not afraid to stray into the more commercial edge of those wondrous days of tight denim jackets, even tighter white Levi pants, and Thursday nights glued to *Top of the Pops*. Heavy throwback to the sounds of the SHANGRI-LAS, the RONETTES, and a slew of other classic Phil Specter girl-groups. A band as rich in pedigree as they are in songs. (SD)
(Pure Filth, c/o Danyka Kosturak, PO Box 15042, San Francisco, CA 94115, thevaticans@sbcglobal.net)

**VIOLENT MINDS – "Just Kicked In" EP**

With each release this band becomes less polished and more…well, DISCHARGE. Is that bad? Fuck no. Another four songs of distorted aggression with a shitload of guitar leads, and lyrics that will either inspire you to take drugs or fight someone (or both). (CC)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

**VIOLENT MINDS – "We Are Nothing" LP**

If a band could kick your head in with music alone, they'd probably sound like this. The new incarnation of the band is a little less NEGATIVE APPROACH and more SS DECONTROL without the edge, with more speed but no less power...the riffage is epic. Vocals are more distorted, but delivery no less pissed. I'm digging the new VIOLENT MINDS—the hardcore scene needs more ugly bands like this. Pills, weed, beer, keep hatin'. Count me in. (TB)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

**VUUR – "Vuurviolence" CD**

I had not heard of this Belgian band, which apparently has been around since 1999 and just now put out this discography CD. How did I

miss their split with SEEIN RED? I liked this CD so much I quickly searched to see if they are playing anywhere I could go see them. This CD beat me into submission with its huge heavy sound. Metalcore and hardcore in the vein of MORSER or ACME or SYSTRAL. I've listened to this disc over and over, which is something I rarely do. You get the tracks from a couple EP and a split CD, a comp track, a couple live tracks, and a BORN AGAINST cover. It is a discography but the band is still active. (MH)
(Acclaim, acclaim.nomasters.com)

**WALLS – "The Crawl/Hands and Knees"**
WALLS is a band that formed after the demise of COLD SWEAT. Their music is a natural progression from the stuff that COLD SWEAT played. The best way to sum up the overall sound on this record is "weird." There are some odd tempo-changes, sudden stops and starts, and strange noises throughout both sides of the record. The guitar is ugly and abrasive. It creates its own layer of noisy melody over the rhythmic and hypnotic drumming. The whole thing comes off as pretty creepy. The vocals are screamed on "Crawl" and more barked-out on "Hands and Knees," but either way, they are super-pissed sounding and compliment the aggressive and heavy music. I imagine the lyrics are about blind submission and whatnot but since there is not a lyric sheet, I can't confirm that. This is good stuff and would fit in well with a record collection that contains CLOCKCLEANER, SNAKE APARTMENT, etc., although WALLS is harsher than those bands. (CI)
(Iron Lung, PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145-2521, ironlungdeath@hotmail.com)

**WAX MUSEUMS – "Traffic Violation" EP**
Denton, Texas based WAX MUSEUMS don't fuck around or mess with a good thing (there's a Don't Mess With Texas joke in there somewhere). The band, which features members of THE WRISTS, has already put out some good-time, hip-shakin' punk EPs that are infectious and boppable, and this latest release on Douchemaster is no exception. It's short, of course, and sped up with some monotone, echoed "yeah yeah"s, "nah nah nah"s, and "oh oh"s thrown in just to make sure you understand this is as dumbed down and basic as it gets. By the time the last track, "Slime," comes around you might feel like you got hit with the BLACK RANDY bat. What a good feeling that is! All three tracks follow the formula alright? Alright. (AL)
(Douchemaster, www.douchemasterrecords.com)

**WEEKEND NACHOS – "Punish and Destroy" LP**
WEEKEND NACHOS…I hate that name. Ugh. These duns play fast part, *slooowwwww* part, fast part powerviolence-styled hardcore. It's good but not quite up to par with some of the current heavyweights in this scene like MIND ERASER, IRON LUNG, or SCAPEGOAT, which makes listening to a 25-song LP a bit much, especially when the songs aren't actually that short. I'm not writing WEEKEND NACHOS off—I bet the next record could be pretty ruling—but please, in order to avoid the joke-band tag (which, prior to my first taste of the 'NACHOS, is where you always lived in my mind), change the name. (JU)
(Cowabunga, www.cowabunga-rex.com)

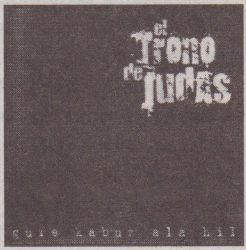
**WITCHES WITH DICKS – "Felix Havoc's Boots" EP**
Fuck Floyd, fuck Floyd's Chargers, Fuck Floyd's fridge—this band rocks. Three tracks of super-melodic (in that East Bay DIY sort of way), super-driving, super-catchy, and, to stick with the over-used super adjective, super-rockin'. The DILLINGER FOUR comparisons are inescapable, but this is punk rock and finding originality in this scene is like finding a vegetarian at a NASCAR race. Don't over-think it, just sit back, crack open the cheap, generic brew of your choice, and lap up three fist-in-the-air anthems, the last a fantastic cover of THE LEMONHEADS' "Second Chance." Oh, and fuck your Arsenal, Floyd. (SD)
(Shock To The System, PO Box 300991, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)

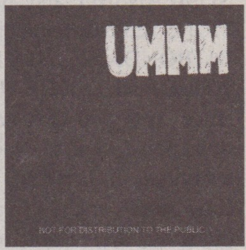
**WITCH HUNT – "Blood Red States" LP**
A reissue of their second LP by the band themselves. WITCH HUNT manages to walk the line between anarcho-HC punk and somewhat melodic HC but seem to do so quite well. Not too abrasive to be crust and not so melodic to be poppy. I know that this style has pretty wide appeal, and it's easy to see why. I think this is a really good release, but personally, I just can't get into them. (NM)
(PO Box 30923, Philadelphia, PA 19104)

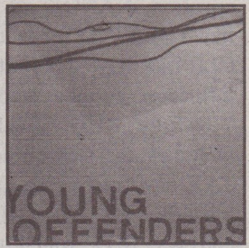
**YMG – "Life Lessons / Down with Bo Jangles"**
YMG (YO MAN GO!) plays some rocking, melodic emo-punk. Never cliché and always posi, this 7" maintains an excellent vibe from start to finish. The songs are long but interesting enough that they don't drag on too much. A feel-good record with a triumphant whoa-oh part at the end. Bonus props to these guys: they added an insert that explains in simple terms the budgeting involved in making your own record along with some useful contacts; and the screen-printed cover art is great. (PC)
($5 ppd: Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview Street, Bethlehem, PA 18020, squareofopposition.cjb.net)

**YOUNG OFFENDERS – "Situations" EP**
Really great energetic punk. It's angular, but more obviously influenced by RUDI than WIRE I would say…maybe THE JAM at their most mod, or THE BIG BOYS with less funk and strong English accents? I wish the record captured more of the power of watching them play—total energy, beer-bellies and Fred Perrys, if you know what I'm sayin'. Instead of a lyric sheet they enclosed a school picture of a bunch of longhairs circa '71. What does it all mean? (LG)
(Parts Unknown, www.partsunknownrecords.com)

**ZENEVSKI DERRET – "Necu Da Budem" EP**
This is an awesome release. ZENEVSKI DERRET is a classic ex-Yugoslavian band from the early '80s finally seeing a release on vinyl. *Necu Da Budem* features raw, chaotic, HC crossover (remember that stuff?!) done quite





well. There were a number of bands from this era in ex-Yugoslavia that we rarely hear about, and placing them in posterity on vinyl is an excellent idea. Great! (NM)
(Nei, Frejsv 9 6 Tr., 145 71 Norsborg, Stockholm, SWEDEN)

**V/A – "All Your Ears Can Hear: Underground Music in Victoria, BC 1978-1984" 2xCD**

Staggering archeological project, compiling well over two hours of music, 80 pages of writing, and hundreds of photos and flyers from the late-'70s/early-'80s Victoria, British Columbia scene (Victoria is the capital city of BC, located on an island off the western coast of Canada, near both Vancouver and Seattle). I don't know whether to classify this as a double-CD with a massive booklet, or a book (it has an ISBN number) that includes two CDs. 46 bands are featured; internationally known NOMEANSNO and the DAYGLO ABORTIONS rub elbows with likes of SQUIRRELS IN BONDAGE, SLUDGE CONFRONTATIONS, and THE BEATEN RETARDS; styles range from 100-mph hardcore thrash, to new wave power-pop, to experimental weirdness, to everything in between. For a compilation that showcases mainly rare/obscure/demo/live material, the results are surprisingly solid, making this not only historically interesting, but also quite listenable. Favorites include the unreleased early NOMEANSNO songs, the pop of EASY MONEY, and the absolutely *raging* DIOXIN track. Top notch all around. (CS)
(AYECH International, www.allyourearscanhear.com)

**V/A – "Neo Wave Nastros" CD**

The Modernist (which appears to be some kind of hipster website) brings you four hot new Japanese punk acts on one CD. There's a heavy new-wave/mod/power-pop slant to the equation. NANOX are very keyboard-heavy, like THE EPOXIES with a dude on vox. THE CLIMAX have a definite '60s/'70s power-pop influence, coming across like THE SCIENTISTS or RUDI. Really strong vocals and melodies, the pick of the comp for me. JOYSTAX have more of a garage sound and some blistering WILKO JOHNSON guitar bashing, and EX BOY round things out with some reverb-heavy pop that sounds a bit like the B-52s. Probably my second favorite band on the CD because they don't sound like much else that's going on right now. On the whole, while this is by no means a comprehensive look at Japan's punk rock scene, it does shine a light on four great bands that merit further attention. I'd embrace the release of a full album by any one of these bands. (AM)
(The Modernist, www.themodernist.com)

**¡V/A – "Network of Friends" CD**

Pretty incredible compilation of some classic (largely European) HC—MOB 47, GEPOPEL, BGK, CRUDE SS, THE EXECUE, SVART FRAMTID, SIEGE, and the like. Not much to write home about if you are already into this stuff but a good introduction if you need one! (NM)
(Social Bomb, Postfach 100205 D-47002 Duisburg, GERMANY)

**V/A – "Perhosten Keraaja" LP**

Four-way split of current Finnish hardcore bands, none of which I've heard before. OMAISUUS VAHINKO kicks things off with some sloppy '80s hardcore, not unlike the faster LAMA material...good shit. DISSECT does super fast hardcore with dual cookie monster/squealing pig vocals and a bathtub recording...urrg...next. On the flip, THE LAYBACKS sound like a drunken street-punk version of DILLINGER FOUR or AMERICAN STEEL...rocking. POLTTOITSEMURHA finishes things up with more traditional-sounding Finn-core; their dual female/male vocals are almost like ANTISCHISM or even a less crusty HIATUS. I'm not a big fan of the four-way split, but three of these bands are ripping, so I'll dig this out once in a while for sure. (TB)
(Roku, www.rokurecords.com)

**V/A – "Propaganda Is Hippies" LP**

It doesn't get better than this, folks—well, not this month. Finland is very finely represented here. This compilation LP highlights some great bands of recent years—the amazing KIELTOLAKI, VIIMEINEN KOLONNA, VAARINKASITYS, TOTUUS, SOTATILA, OMAISUUSVAHINKO, and lastly YHTEISKUNNAN YSTAVAT. There is not a bad song on this record. The art, layout, and music will immediately remind some folks of the old Propaganda compilations from the '80s. Finland has a history of producing some insanely harsh sounds, and the Finns have always ingested punk rock and puked it back out at us ten times crazier than we could ever imagine. Search this out. *Now!!!* (MS)
(Kamaset Levyt, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen)

**V/A – "Still Got Something to Prove" EP**

SPERMBIRDS has always been something of a favorite, so it's predictable that, eventually, they'd be associated with some kind of "tribute" record; six tracks, and the quality remains high throughout. Amusingly, LOWLIFE UK covers the QUEER PILL's (ANGRY SAMOANS) "Lights Out"—a thickly recorded slice, more powerful than either original. SWELLBELLY's "Something to Prove" falls in the same style, and SUNPOWER's "My Gold Rides a Skateboard" works best as a "sing-along"—but it's still great fun. Six tunes total, and each one is particularly strong and consistent with the music and energy. A really strong release—even for non-SPERMBIRDS fans. (SS)
(Peter Bower, 10 Somerdale Walk, Bramley, Leeds LS13, UNITED KINGDOM)

**V/A – "Straight Outta 'Sconsin" CD**

Here's a sixteen-track comp of proud, cheese-curd-eating, beer-swilling Wisconsin bands. It's mostly pop-punk and ska-punk fare, the best of which happen to be: MODERN MACHINES, SOCIAL CLASSICS, THE AMNIOTICS, and COCKNEY AMERICANS. (AA)
(Wisconsin Punk, 315-1/2 Mead Street, Eau Claire, WI 54703)

**V/A – "This Was Supposed to Be a Celebration" LP**

A vinyl release of the CD released by the Mauled By Tigers collective that featured bands that they worked with or that played the fests they organized. The punk tracks on this record, by bands like UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND, HUNCHBACK, CANADIAN RIFLE, and TULSA, all kick ass, while the non-punk music reminds me too much of thrift store kids trying to start an alternative dance band. If there were a track listing on the labels or even an A/B side breakdown on the insert, it would have been most helpful. This LP is a good pickup but not essential. (JF)
(Do The Math, 2236 N. Sawyer #1, Chicago, IL 60647, www.dothemathrecords.com)

**V/A – "Uleaborgland Hardcore Attack" LP**

Four-way compilation of songs from BURN AGAIN, PATHOS GAZETTE, BRUTOPIA, and THROWBACK. Overall, a solid 12" grind comp, but the exception and my favorite tracks from this Finnish collection are from BRUTOPIA who play excellent head-stomping, pub-wrecking, straight-to-the-fucking-point outlaw punk. I think this band shares members with BURN AGAIN and PATHOS GAZETTE; the latter playing slaughter-inducing grind with creative breakdowns and time changes that shred and don't sound too technical. BURN AGAIN plays more standard mid-tempo Motör-Charge styled songs; nothing earth-shattering, but for sure a band I'd want to see live. THROWBACK play grind more rooted in macabre flesh-eating metal with deep guttural vocals and good hook-laden and quick blasting songs. (BS)
(SUPO/Ruko, PL83, 9010, Oulu, FINLAND, www.sporecords.com, PL148, 96101, Rovaniemi, FINLAND, rokurecords.com)

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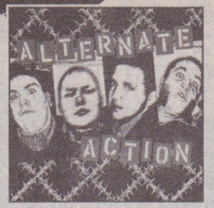


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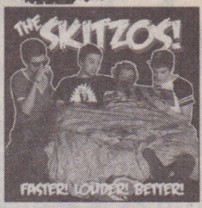


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aalborg - 1000 fryd
26.08.07 SUNDAY / NORWAY
arendal - rehearsal room
27.08.07 MONDAY / NORWAY oslo - barikaden
28.08.07 TUESDAY / SWEDEN linkping - skylten
29.08.07 WEDNESDAY / SWEDEN umea - verket
30.08.07 THURSDAY / SWEDEN lulea - lillan
31.08.07 FRIDAY / FINLAND oulo - park 57
01.09.07 SATURDAY / FINLAND
vaasa - club 25 TBC
02.09.07 SUNDAY / FINLAND
tampere - vastavirta
03.09.07 MONDAY / FINLAND turku - tvo
04.09.07 TUESDAY / FINLAND helsinki - factory
05.09.07 WEDNESDAY / FINLANravelday with the
booze cruise to sweden
06.09.07 THURSDAY / SWEDEN
stockholm - kafe 44
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09.09.07 SUNDAY / GERMANY
berlin - koepi w/ KOLOKOL [NOR]
10.09.07 MONDAY / POLAND
poznan - rozbrat squat
11.09.07 TUESDAY / POLAND
warshaw - elba squat
12.09.07 WEDNESDAY / POLAND lublin - tektura
13.09.07 THURSDAY / POLAND
wroclaw - crk jagiellonczyka
14.09.07 FRIDAY / CZECH REP praha - 007
15.09.07 SATURDAY / CZECH REP.
brno - yacht club
16.09.07 SUNDAY / AUSTRIA vienna - ekh
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22.09.07 SATURDAY / GREECE
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26.09.07 WEDNESDAY / ITALY bari
27.09.07 THURSDAY / ITALY
roma - pirateria squat
28.09.07 FRIDAY / ITALY
cesena - al confino squat
29.09.07 SATURDAY / ITALY
venice - c.s. rivolta
30.09.07 SUNDAY / ITALY
bologna - atlantide squat
01.10.07 MONDAY / ITALY day off
02.10.07 TUESDAY / FRANCE
nice - le volume TBC
03.10.07 WEDNESDAY / SPAIN
barcelona w/ ETACARINAE
04.10.07 THURSDAY / SPAIN valencia TBC
05.10.07 FRIDAY / SPAIN zaragoza - arrebato
w/ TXIXAPARRAZTA [ESP]
06.10.07 SATURDAY / SPAIN llodio -
orbekooetxea squat w/ TXIXAPARRAZTA [ESP]
07.10.07 SUNDAY / SPAIN zarautz - putzuzulo
squat w/ TXIXAPARRAZTA [ESP]
08.10.07 MONDAY / FRANCE toulouse TBC
09.10.07 TUESDAY / FRANCE grenoble
10.10.07 WEDNESDAY / FRANCE st.
etienne - le lokal
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besancon - bar des arcades
12.10.07 FRIDAY / FRANCE paris
13.10.07 SATURDAY / UK london - grosvenour
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17.10.07 WEDNESDAY / IRL galway
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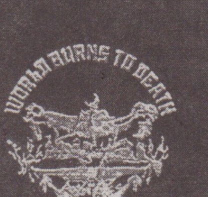


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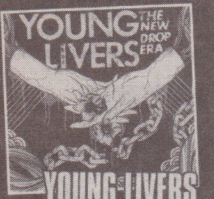


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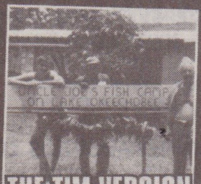

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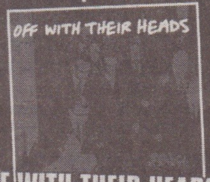


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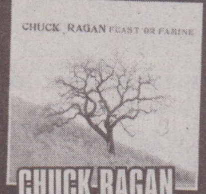


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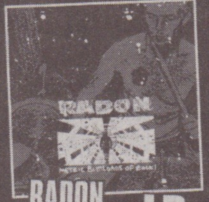


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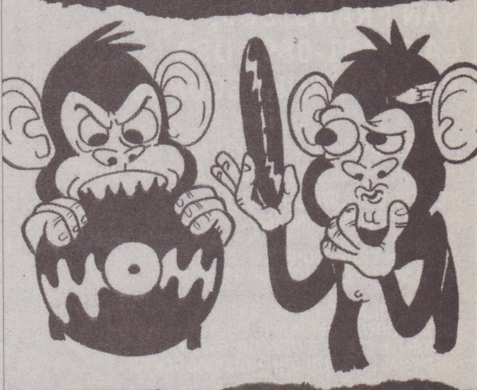


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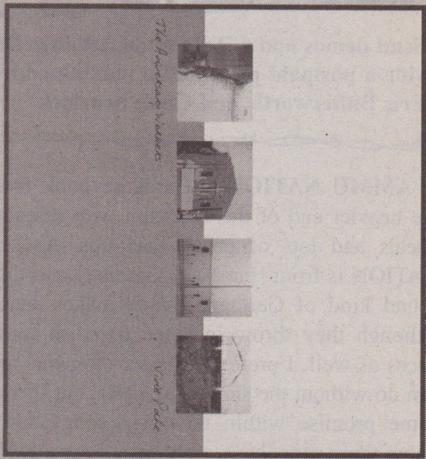

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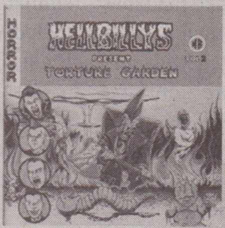


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# DEMOS

**Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Eric Butterworth, and Cissie Scurlock.**

**AMMU NATION** – Hardcore punk from the heavier end of the spectrum with screamy vocals and lots of group back-ups. AMMU NATION is from Hamburg, Germany and they sound kind of German, if that makes sense, although they throw in some Swedish influences as well. I prefer the faster moments and can do without the slow/chug parts, but there's some promise within these six songs and I know these guys have good taste 'cos a RAW POWER cover rounds out this tape. (Cissie) (6-song cassette, lyrics included. ammunation@antitainment.de)

**LA ARMADA ROJA / TROPIEZO** – TROPIEZO from Puerto Rico starts this split off with some pretty fucking blazing, catchy thrash—infectious sing-along parts and melodic guitar leads placed throughout. Nice! LA ARMADA ROJA, who lived in the Dominican Republic at the time of this recording and has (semi-) recently relocated to Chicago, plays with more of an '88 NYHC influence. There are some definite metal moments—mosh breakdowns and some wailing maniac guitar leads. This is a really cool split! (Justin) (15-song CD, Spanish lyrics included c/o Discos de Hoy, Calle 4, C-5 Parque Montebello, Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico 00976, www.discosdehoy.com)

**BAD ADVICE** – Here we have the three-song debut from another ripping new band from the Richmond, VA area. It features a tag-team of nogoodnik yokels from your other fave RVA bands. I won't tell you who, just understand that you can expect a certain level of quality with this release that is usually associated with this scene. BAD ADVICE is more on the punk/proto-hardcore tip than a lot of other bands mining the early-'80s—for a reference, go listen to the song "Out of Vogue." Aces all around. (Justin) (3-song CD, no lyrics included. No address)

**BARREN** – Cool, melodic punk from Chicago with female vocals that vary from sung to screamed. BARREN has a good sound on this demo and some originality in the songwriting. The lyrics are in the personal/political mold and touch on suicide, pro-lifers, sexism in the punk scene, etc. Sometimes it comes off a bit simplistic but overall this is decent and these guys have the right idea. (Cissie) (5-song CD, lyrics included. 1321 W. Milwaukee Ave., PMB 460, Chicago, IL 60622, barrenband3@yahoo.com)

**BLACK SISTER** – These guys get a little crazy with five short, grinding, metal-influenced hardcore songs. This part-Hungarian, part-Scottish band sounds like they mixed a metal vocalist and guitar player with a hardcore punk rhythm section. There are lots of galloping guitar riffs and power chords that speed their way up and down the fret board (some occasional wanking as well). The vocalist spends most of his time with a high screech but throws in the low growl where necessary. The bass and drums manage to keep things together with solid playing that never really slows down. They've got good songs and a recording that's worthy of more than a demo. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included. $3 or £1.50 ppd: c/o Problem?, Pillars, Stathmiglo Rd., Falkland, Fife, KY15 7AD, Scotland)

**CONVERSIONS** – First off, Mr. Strunk is hands down one of the craziest drummers in punk. Just watch his face when he plays! Priceless. CONVERSIONS are pretty hard to pin down. They use lots of herky-jerky riffs, screaming vocals, and repetition (almost to the point of, "I think they just played that riff a bit too long") to the advantage in creating something all their own. Much like the way NATION OF ULYSSES used free-form, outside influence and added it to what was currently known as hardcore—CONVERSIONS have taken a similar approach. (Justin) (Cassette, no lyrics included. 29 Lourdes Ave Apt #6, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, christopherstrunk@yahoo.com)

**CRAZY STALLION** – This CD-R release was sent at least a year ago (sorry). CRAZY STALLION plays technical hardcore thrash music with screaming vocals that hurt my throat. The guitars gallop and go into some wanking metal parts and there are some changes in time signature. The recording isn't too good but it is refreshing to hear the classic grindcore sound with a bit of a math rock twist. The couple of live songs sound decent as well. (Pete) (10 song CD, lyrics included. 126 John Street, Dekalb, IL 60115, www.freewebs.com/crazystalliondekalb)

**CRUX / WORKSHY** – CRUX is a band from Australia and WORKSHY hails from New Zealand. Unlike most demos these days, they spent a lot of time on the packaging, which has nice silk-screened covers and thoughtful, creative inserts. CRUX has dual vocals, one vocalist being semi-crusty while the other is circa '90s screamo. The music is talented with technical and spastic parts. WORKSHY has more of a lo-fi, raw sound. It's hardcore with a slight metal tinge. They like skateboarding so I already love them. Shit's goooooooood. (Eric) (19-songs, lyrics included. xin_denialx@yahoo.co.nz, lachiehawk@hotmail.com)

**DEAD NOISE** – Holy crap is this raw and blown out! This SoCal band has just joined the ranks of the post-ATROCIOUS MADNESS "crasher crust" scene, which includes the likes of AGHAST, et al.—all distortion, all the time. They top it all off with GLOOM and DISORDER covers. Get the motherfuckin' picture? PS. I listened to this 20 minutes ago and my ears are still a-ringing. (Justin) (9-song CD, no lyrics included. $4 ppd with a patch, $4.50 ppd with a button: 602 South Mott Street, Los Angeles, CA 90023)

**DO YOUR F*CKING DISHES** – Yup...believe it or not, that's the name of a band. This is lo-fi, classic-era East Bay-style pop punk. Woah!! Until they throw in those weird growling vocals in that one part, then they threw me for a loop. Let me get my bearings straight. You get five originals plus a cover of the BRUSH YOUR SH*TTY TEETH classic, "Cruster General." (Justin) (6-song cassette, lyrics included. 29 Custer Street, Buffalo, NY 14214)

**GARLIC BREATH** – You'll have to turn up the volume on this demo tape, but it may be worth it. The songs are short blasts of sloppy, thrashy hardcore and the only instrumentation is distorted bass and drums and two people screaming like crazy. The recording quality makes it a bit of a hard listen but the amount of energy in the songs makes up for that. The B-side has a talk about image and weight in society. (Pete) (7-song tape, lyrics included. $2 ppd: 306 N. 5th St., Grand Haven, MI 49417, betty_poop@riseup.net)

**GASMASK & MATCHSTICKS** – GASMASK & MATCHSTICKS has a raw, thrash attack—the kind that seems like it might fall apart at any given moment but somehow man-

ages to keep it together. At times, when it is not on the verge of collapsing, the music veers into powerviolence territory. I personally prefer the former 'cos in these moments I am *almost* reminded of another Georgia band, NEON CHRIST. The hardcore scene in the south is fruitful at the moment and this is another band to keep an eye on if they ever put out some vinyl. (Cissie) (12-song CD, lyrics included. $4 ppd: 341 Athens Ave., Athens, GA 30601)

**GODFODDER** – This demo's cool. Traditional golden-era US hardcore from a St. Louis band that has more in common with bands like HARPOON GUNS and TOTAL ABUSE than say WASTED TIME or 86 MENTALITY. More "snotty" than "tough" with a really cool clean guitar sound, and these mugs actually know how to write catchy, memorable songs without sacrificing the speed. Nice work. (Justin) (13-song cassette, no lyrics. $2 ppd: 3343 Texas Street, Saint Louis, MO 63118, basicradio@hotmail.com)

**JERK ALERT** – This CD-R has ten sloppy and poppy punk rock songs (apparently six of which appear on a 7" as well). The vocal duties are shared by one gal and one guy, both of whom sound ridiculously snotty and off-key. The vocalists are backed by basic, three-chord, RAMONES/STOOGES-influenced punk rock. It's simple but fun. (Pete) (10-song CD, no lyrics included. $4 ppd: P.O. Box 191, Bloomington, IN 47404, jerkalertjerks@yahoo.com)

**THE KANAMITS / WORMEATERS** – Another split demo tape, only this one hails from the East Coast. THE KANAMITS draw influence from 7 SECONDS and the old female-fronted New York band NO THANKS. WORMEATERS has a tougher vibe—almost early East Coast hardcore. One of their songs reminds me of DYS. Both bands are killer. (Eric) (12-songs, no lyrics included. myspace.com/kanamits, myspace.com/wormeaters)

**MUCKRAKER** – I would have never guessed that this was cool, snotty, garage punk from the cover, but that's what we have here. I don't have much information to work with, but it seems like MUCKRAKER is a one-man studio project with a drum machine. It's actually quite good as there are some catchy tunes here. (Cissie) (9-song CD, no lyrics included. muckrakermuck@yahoo.com)

**NATURAL ORDER** – This gives me the same feeling as when I first heard THE SNOBS. Young kids playing the simplest of simple HC. NATURAL ORDER has that "learning as we go" kinda feel similar to bands like TEEN IDLES. It's all topped off with sweet, out-of-tune covers of "Screaming at a Wall" and "Stabbed in the Back." At least one song on this, probably either "Fuck You" or "On a Leash," will make it onto my next HC mix tape. (Justin) (15-song CD, no lyrics included. youthbrigade81@yahoo.com)

**REAL UGLY** – Two-piece grinding thrash...plain and simple. Both members contribute vocals to the summoning of evil spirits, and the music is technically proficient with lots of quick, false, harmonic breaks tossed about. If this is your thing, they've tossed the bait. Now bite! (Justin) (8-song CD, lyrics included. $3 ppd: PO Box 721, Frazer, PA 19355)

**RECYCLED RUINS** – Mid-paced, atypical hardcore that has my head a-bobbin'. They occasionally bust into moshy parts that feel a little loose and some guitar breaks that aren't quite there; these Floridian rubes have a bit of honing to do but their ideas are fresh. They could end up being something to keep an eye on. (Justin) (8-song CD, no lyrics included. Free: 4940 Southfork Ranch Drive, Orlando, FL 32812)

**RED MARK** – Another one-man band with a drum machine (the second of the month, for me)! This is the second RED MARK demo and this CD-R also includes the first one. The recording on the new songs is a step up but still has the annoying wavey whir that plagues a lot of amateur digital recordings. The music and vocals are reminiscent of old SoCal stuff, maybe TSOL. The songs are well written and I especially like Mark's vocals. The inflection is just right and they are really catchy in a non-irritating way. Although it's awesome when folks go out on their own and start projects like this—the ultimate DIY approach—it would get a lot more spins if it had a better recording and a real drummer. (Cissie) (10-song CD, lyrics included. maggotfarm@hotmail.com)

**SICK, SICK, SICK** – Total PIST-styled punk rock here with a hint of Fat Wreck influence too (mainly in the guitar flourishes and sound). The rhythm section marches on and the vocals bark out in an aggressive sing-along fashion. The vocals are my favorite part of this recording. I kinda wish that they included lyrics because these guys are angry about something but I can't figure out what's made them mad. I can say they're most definitely influenced by Pabst Blue Ribbon as a PBR bottle is the most prominent item on the back cover. For fans of THE PIST and PBR? (Cissie) (6-song CD, no lyrics included. $1 ppd: 423 Florida Ave., New Ellenton, SC 29809)

**TEENAGE COOL KIDS** – I grabbed this demo out of the pile because the art caught my eye and after listening to it I like the music even more than the rad art! This band's fucking great. It's as if a band like THE PROMISE RING had its demo dug up and released. There's even a song mid-way through side B that reminds me of a vocal part on a BELLE AND SEBASTIAN song. More kids need to play lo-fi pop. (Eric) (7-songs, lyrics included. npnr666@gmail.com)

**THEDA BARA** – This is actually a pretty nice listen. Heavy, sweeping emo-ish rock that usually finds a deep groove and rides it to shore before paddling back out to take the next one. The guitar is loaded with effects but the result is pretty cool and works really well with their sound. Vocals range from a SISTERS OF MERCY-like monotonous chant, to a '90s heavy Canadian HC type scream, to a lower growl. Imagine an ugly offspring of REMAINS OF THE DAY and CERBERUS SHOAL. (Justin) (4-song CD, no lyrics included. $3 ppd c/o Volatile Rock, 10128 NE Pacific Street, Portland, OR 97220, www.volatilerock.com)

**WRISTER** – I have to apologize to WRISTER for taking so long to get to their demo. Anyway, the band has a CD-R of emotional pop punk songs. WRISTER is akin to early HOT WATER MUSIC or SMALL BROWN BIKE, with roughly-sung vocals over mid-tempo songs that mix pop punk with the late-'80s Dischord sound. The music is played well and the recording is pretty good. (Pete) (7-song CD, no lyrics included. $5 ppd: 141 Moreland Ave. SE, Atlanta, GA 30316, www.alaskarecords.net)

**ZHENIA GOLOV** – ZHENIA GOLOV plays four hardcore songs that sound a bit messy, which is in all likelihood due to the less than ideal recording quality. This is fast and heavy with basic but solid drumming, three-chord riffs, a whole bunch of guitar wanking and typical slowed-down bridges for the optimal mosh experience. The vocalist is a growler who is reminiscent of the guy from THE PIST. On the whole, the band's songs seem longer than the approximate two minutes they each clock in at. On the upside, the first track is a good song with a great hook near the end. (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. 85 Delafield Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, writteningasoline@yahoo.com)

**V/A "Maggot Minded"** – Woah, what an eclectic mix of jammers. This actually reminds me a ton of the *Genital Thumbprint* comp tape that came out in the late-'80s, mostly because the HIV and LOOSE CHANGE songs on here are reminiscent of the TechNO and HOPE DEKAPITATOR songs on that comp. This tape features seven bands from the Olympia/Seattle area. You get previously unreleased tracks by the two aforementioned bands along with the atypical thrash metal of HORRIBLE and FUNEROT, a weirder, droning, stoned mess from WHITE BOSS, some codeine pop from SISTERS, and the raging arty hardcore of SEX VID. Despite the recording quality, this is a really cool look at an incredibly varied scene of bands whose tastes venture beyond the end of their noses. Take notice you lemmings! (14-song cassette, no lyrics included. $5 ppd: c/o Reuben Storey, PO Box 835, Olympia, WA 98507) (Justin)

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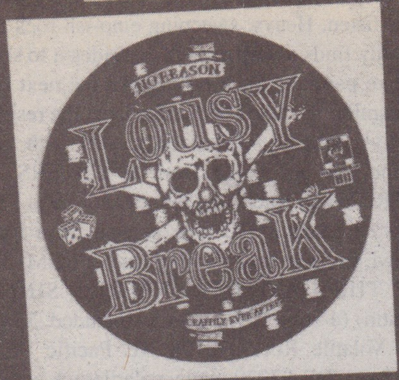


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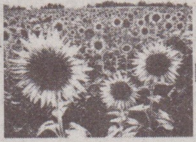

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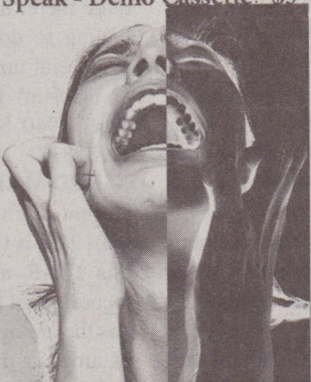
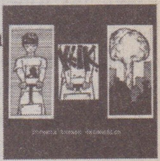


### JUST RELEASED!

$4 Get Destroyed 7" - Pounding, grinding hardcore that pays homage to the fore-fathers of powerviolence. Hard to believe its their debut release.



Phoenix Thrash Detonation Comp. 7" - Some of the wild west's fastest and most brutal on one record. Songs from Landmine Marathon, Think Fast, Get Destroyed and more! $4

Think Fast - Punch Out For Good EP 7" - A limited pressing of 250 for this one sided record. Coffee stained inserts and hand screened covers are included in each. 50/250 covers w/ blue ink. $5

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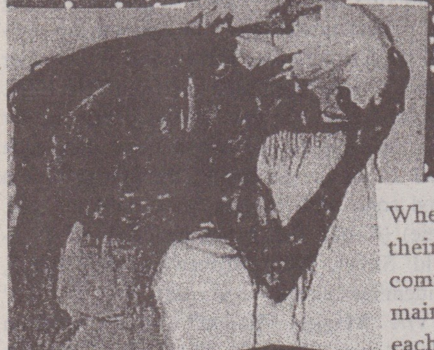


# RADICAL GRIEF & LOSS COMP ZINE

When someone dies it can be hard for those affected to rebuild their lives, and it can be scary to try and help them. As a radical community seeking to create a sustainable alternative to mainstream culture, its important that we learn how to support each other, even when the worst happens.

"The Worst" is a compilation of stories, art, poetry, etc. representing the grief process from a punk/d.i.y./anti-oppression viewpoint. It is a resource for those seeking comfort through dialogue and shared experiences, and for those in the radical community who wish to gain insight into supporting people who are dealing with these issues.

Submissions can explore themes such as:

- ★ The death of a parent, sibling, or friend
- ★ The chronic or terminal illness of somebody important in your life
- ★ What are positive and negative examples of reactions to your loss when you asked the radical community for support?
- ★ Your personal experience dealing with the pain, loneliness, anger, and wisdom that can come from grief
- ★ If you are helping someone cope with a loss, what can you say or do?

Send submissions to:
TheWorstZine@gmail.com
P.O. Box 3154 /Astoria, NY/11103
Anonymous submissions are welcome.

http://www.myspace.com/theworst compilationzine

# ZINES

*Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.*

**Reviews by:**
**(AA) Ariel Awesome** **(PC) Paul Curran** **(CS) Chris Hubbard** **(NM) Nick Mangel** **(CR) Casey Ress**
**(JB) Julia Booze** **(DH) Damian Harris** **(MJ) Meredith Jones** **(JM) Jeff Mason** **(CI) Cissie Scurlock**
**(JU) Justin Briggs** **(CH) Cassie Harwood** **(ML) Mike Leslie** **(MP) Mason Pince** **(DS) Dionne Stevens**

**ALL HELL HANGS LOOSE** "Pilot Issue" / $?
8.5 x 11.5 – printed – 44 pgs + CD-R
Though executed in the conventional "music zine" format—columns, interviews, reviews, etc.—what makes *All Hell Hangs Loose* unique is that it is a zine about hardcore (music) and windsurfing (the sport); though, to be fair, there's much more on the former than the latter. This thoughtfully assembled zine is the work of one person, and his writing is not self-conscious in the slightest. By the time I was finished, I felt I had a good feeling for the dude's personality. Anyway, I found the columns the most interesting here—there are short but informative articles on an imprisoned former member of the RAF seeking parole in Germany, DIY economics and self-exploitation, Berlin's renowned Køpi squat, and more. The author interviews bands he loves (Los Destructos, The Fight, Bud Hoskins) and people he knows (La Herradura Windsurf Station owner Rob, Jamie Thomson of Shank/The Process/Suburban Disease), so while he often knows the right questions to ask, sometimes I feel like his own personal tastes and interests don't really appeal to me personally. Nonetheless, this zine is well written and engaging, and, as a final plus, comes with a CD-R of an unreleased album by Los Destructos. Looking forward to the next one! (CS)
c/o Stephan Bothe / Mainzer Str. 38 / 12053 Berlin / Germany
www.allhellhangsloose.co.nr / ahhl@family-man.org

**ANARCHY** #64 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 – printed – 80 pgs
Not for the faint of heart 18-24 crowd trying to get scene points or pointers, or maybe that is exactly who this rag is for—if you can catch one between his couch-surfing or Greyhound-hopping gigs (see review of Body Count this issue), shove it into his backpack. But let me be clear, this is not a primer. You *reaaaallly* have to settle in and put on the "focus goggles" to appreciate the heavy, somewhat obfuscating writing; my guess is that most regular readers are already past their lifestylist orientation and are more interested in very intellectual critiques than trying to broaden their party talk vocabulary or get girls. Also, the website has discussion forums, which makes the internet have a real purpose. One thing this magazine always has is a huge book review section and a long overview of current events. My personal favorite is the quiz at the back

(this one is "How Capitalistic Are You?"), but that's the kind of girl I am, always looking for the horoscope first. This issue has a Capitalism theme, so the analysis herein takes a look at creating a definition for the Anarchist thought around and response to the system that seems like it has always been "the way things are." The article on Anarchists in Business is especially worth looking through since it is self-reflective, not just working with the status quo, yelling through the glaze of the dust on the armchairs. (JB)
PO Box 3448 / Berkeley, CA 94703
www.anarchy.org

**BEAT MOTEL** #7 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 82 pgs
There's something very charming about this British zine. It's part personal zine with a heavy dose of humor, and it definitely includes the standard punk reviews, interviews, etc. Facts about being over 25, weird shit on eBay, MySpace, weird facts, the truth about Nestle, etc. The layout is done very well and it has a lot of little articles and pieces to read that tell you the editor really spent time on it. Great! (NM)
PO Box 773 / Ipswich / IP1 9FT / United Kingdom

**THE BLACKLIST** #1 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 – color copied – 28 pgs
The date on the cover says June 2005, but the information inside still seems relevant. *The Blacklist* is a combination of standard punk reviews and stuff, but the most interesting piece is an essay about asylum seekers entering Australia from Africa and Asia. It serves as a reminder of white privilege, and how people love to complain about their miserable situations, while, truth-be-told, most white citizens of industrialized nations don't know from struggle. Is this a reprint of the first issue? I haven't encountered this zine before. Maybe reissue is intended to re-emphasize the point that people should make use of their freedoms and abilities, rather than indulging in self-pity. The struggle is internal most of the time. (DS)
The Blacklist / 36 Douglas St. / Greenslopes 4169 QLD

**BODY COUNT** #2 / $2.50 or trade or stamps or a trade and some stamps
5.5 x 8.5 –copied – 44 pgs
Parts of this zine are undeniably cute, like the section "ideas for what to do with the flag your Republican Uncle gave you" (especially coming from a Canadian), or the "I learned a

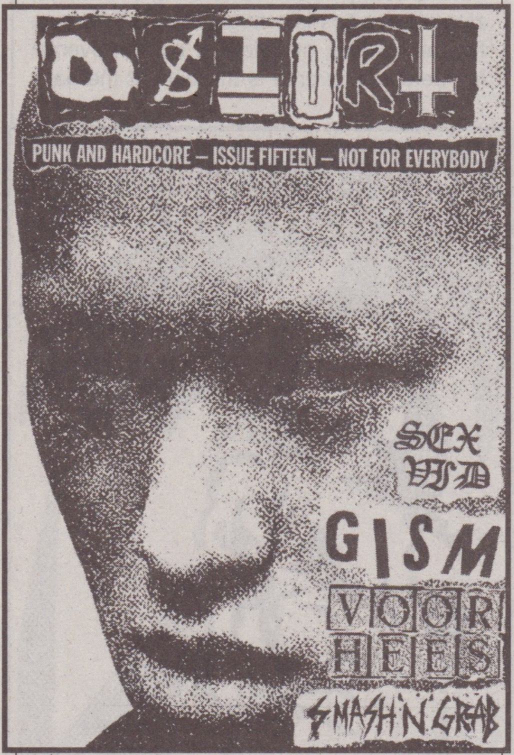
lot about myself this summer. It's time to commit myself to anarchy and go vegan." Or like how there's a Blatz quote right on the front cover…but…it sort of putters out here and there. If one must do a zine detailing bus trips, just *lie* more about what happened (which he does once talking about throwing a crying baby out the window) so it isn't so repetitive and self-nullifying. I mean, we all have our mundane moments of solitude, but not all of us decide to publish it. I guess I like it when people are un-self conscious—that's more "real"—and I like seeing the latest issue of *Slingshot* used as a background, and I always like hearing people's reviews of Gilman and Telegraph Avenue. My favorite part is definitely where pigeons are declared to be the crustlords of the flight world, and how the writer feels more solidarity with pigeons than with most people. Haven't we all felt like that? Still, I'd like to see this kid sit down with an editorial board and refine his "voice." (JB)
Damien / 3608 28th Street SE / Calgary AB / T2B 2H9 / Canada

**CALL AND RESPONSE** #2 / $4
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pages
Pretty cool concept zine with the focus being on people who travel to other countries frequently or live in other countries. Many contributors give comments on language, experience, stories, etc. I believe this topic is mainly for this issue but it seems well assembled. Cool. (NM)
Gianni Simone / 3-3-23 Nagatssuta / Madori-ku, Yokahama / 226-0027 Kanagawa Ken / Japan

**CONSTANT MIGRAINE** #2 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 40 pages
Good basic punk rock zine from Indianapolis. This issue has interviews with Propagandhi, Akimbo, Trap Them, The Dream Is Dead, and Brody's Militia. Also included are several columns, a few reviews, and info on a Dudefest, a local punk fest. Nothing earth-shattering, but not bad either. (NM)
(29 S Linwood Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46201)

**COUGH** #5 /$2
5.5 x 4 – copied – 24 pgs
Though a short read, *Cough* does succeed in making a cute and aesthetically pleasing read. This issue contains illustrations, an interview with the creators of *Swingset* magazine, a screen-printing tutorial, and a short article on why piercing guns suck. Though nothing within really thrilled me, it is a nice piece of work that Tina obviously put a good amount of time and attention to. (CR)
PO Box 604 / Moss Beach, CA 94038
coughzine@yahoo.com

**DISTORT** #14 / $3, 5 issue sub $10
7.75 x 11.25 – copied – 20 pgs
The huge format allows plenty of room for reprinted flyers, photos of old and new bands, interviews and reviews. This installment: the fuckhead in charge talks with long- and recently-gone bands, the State, Cold Sweat, and Australia's own Subversion. These interviews aren't bad. The reviews tend to be longer and detailed, covering mostly fast hardcore and crusty shit. There is also an introductory piece, describing choice gigs from his band's tour with Regulations. The layout is black and white, nothing fancy. For my tastes, this zine does everything right—it even really comes out regularly enough to offer subscriptions—but still I don't get real excited about it. I would say it is worth checking out. (JM)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Vic 3054 / Australia
culthardcore.org / distorttheworld@gmail.com




**DISTORT** #15 / $3, 5 issue sub $10
13 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
So, recently I lamented the postal rate hike. Now I must say something that is maybe fucked up, but here's what I think. The last few months there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of paper zines coming in to *MRR*. The increase I have seen is in quality because so much shit is dropping off, most likely due to media-mail rates practically doubling. The importance of maintaining this paper tradition is hard to put into words, but the market was saturated with boring perzines for a long while and I am relieved to have far less of those to review. I can concentrate on the goods! *Distort* deserves to stay in print. If you wanna read about SEX/VID or think you'd enjoy a collector waxing G.I.S.M. then definitely get a hold of issue 15. There is also a really cool comic centerfold and no bullshit reviews. (DS)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Vic 3054 / Australia
culthardcore.org / distorttheworld@gmail.com

**DOLL** #242 / $?
8.5 x 5.5- printed – 138 pgs – Japanese
Every month, we get the newest issue of the "super rock magazine" *Doll* for review. It's in Japanese, and I've yet to find a reviewer that can read it. I am not that reviewer either. The best I can do is run through a summary of the bands featured or interviewed in this thick and slick publication. This issue features Sham 69 on the cover, and inside are interviews with Julian Temple, Systematic Death, Fuck You Heroes, The Groovers, Idol Punch, Kenzi and the Trips, The Birthday, and about twenty more. There's a Sao Paulo scene report, reviews, a reprint from *Maximum*, and so many photos that if I knew the price, I'd say it's worth it. The only confusion I have is the photo of the singer from Creep Out. He's screaming into a microphone wearing gardening gloves. I think that's really strange. (CR)
No. 303 Aota Bldg. / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan
www.doll-mag.co.jp

**DOROTHEA** #1 / 50 cents or $1
Wow. Heavy stuff. The author wrote these short stories right after his mother died, and so reading each short story brings this light on the reader as you move through each passage. This zine put me in a really sad mood—it was just so sad to me. One of the last stories describes the day he buried his mother. What made it so heartbreaking to me was the fact that the author tried to make the story a little bit funny—which made the story more memorable, but I still feel sad from reading it. This zine is well written, but expect tears. (MJ)
Mike Baker / 5666 Split Oak Lane / Tallahasse, FL 32303
gomek@comcast.net

**EAR DAMAGE** #18 / $2
5.5 x 8 – printed – 40 pgs
This publication will not add to the glory of the Mobile (Gulf Coast) punks. Musically, they review the shit TKO sent 'em—ho hum—and Blag Dalia and the River City Tanlines are interviewed. Blag has mastered the one-line response, so this interview is better than one might suspect. The talk with the pride of Memphis also is done well enough. The editor also writes about older

releases he has enjoyed. The zine covers pornography, in particular something called "alt porn," with which I am not familiar, but near as I can tell it is released by major companies and is typical shit. A lady who directs such work is interviewed. The editor includes a story about the influence porn has played in his life, times he found dirty magazines at his uncle's house, etc. An article compares the ethics of the Republican party to mainstream hip-hop. The layout shows many signs of a computer being used, and the resulting aesthetic I find ugly (not in a good way.) Even if I lived in Mobile, I would not pay $2 (or anything) for this. (JM)
PO Box 582 / Eight Mile, AL 36663

**THE EAST VILLAGE INKY** #35 / $3
4 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
For me this zine was one of those zines that don't really explain what's going on, so if you haven't read the previous issues you end up sort of lost. The only parts I really enjoyed while reading were when the writer wasn't talking about her kids. The art in this zine was the best part. If you have kids you should buy this zine. (MP)
Ayun Halliday / PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202

**EQUALIZING DISTORT** vol. 7, # 3 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs
This zine has been around for quite some time now. The premise is to publish the interviews that are broadcasted on the radio show of the same name on CIUT in Toronto. Since it is broadcasted from Canada, the bands covered are often Canadian, and in this issue Black Spokes from Toronto and Limb from Limb from Vancouver are interviewed. In addition to the interviews, there's a photo-spread with some Japanese hardcore bands, record reviews, and some punk news and flyers. The interviews are OK but some of the questions are kind of banal. The interviews tend to cover the basics such as "when is your next record coming out," "what are the lyrics about," "how would you describe your sound,". etc. They don't go much deeper than that and it is not very interesting to read. I think that might be a result of the fact that it is meant for a radio show. With that said, it is really great that radio programs like *Equalizing Distort* exist. I love radio shows that have bands play live sets. It is a really cool medium because it shows the band in a rawer element but the sound isn't too blown-out or indecipherable like a straight-up live recording. Anyway, this is cool as a document of what these folks are doing, but it is not the most exciting read. (CI)
21 Foundry Avenue, Unit 5 / Toronto, ON / M6H 4K7 / Canada

**GIVE ME BACK** Summer '07 / $1.50 ppd
8.5 x 11 – printed – 56 pgs
This second issue of *Give Me Back* (the phoenix sprung from the ashes of the long running *HeartattaCk* fanzine) has a way better feeling now that it has its own look that is less tied to that of *HaC*. It seems a little thinner on content than the first issue, but everything here is quality—highly readable and fresh columns, interviews (in this issue: Des Ark, Daitro, Hey Girl, World Inferno Friendship Society), and a diverse reviews section. This is a great new zine, so check them out and give them some support. (AA)
PO Box 73691 / Washington, DC 20056

**HEY RONNIE** #2 / $2 ppd US, $3 ppd World, or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
Short but visually appealing cut 'n' paste zine focusing on the current HC scene—I really love the cool flyer reproductions! This is the "Arizona Issue"; apparently the author spent some time out there, and there are interviews with Phoenix bands Think Fast, Get Destroyed, and JFA. I'm also into the fact that there's an extensive demo review section as opposed to the standard record reviews. Keep 'em coming… (CS)
1142 Illini Drive / O Fallon, IL 62269
martinpoop@msn.com

**LOSERDOM** #16 / $?
5.5 x 8 – copied – 78 pgs
I love the style of the fully equipped Irish combo zine with comics, bands and zinester interviews, reviews, and personal commentary on everything. The comics are kinda about biking around Amsterdam and nature, and there is a truly bad ass interview with G.W. Sok from the Ex and this zine dude who made a zine called *Smegma* back before the internet ruined everything. Plus, the cover is screen-printed and it is bound with twine. Very open-minded and funny! Whatever price they're asking, just go for it. I am looking forward to seeing more of this shit. (JB)
loserdomzine@gmail.com

**LOVE IN THE TIME OF SCABIES** #3 / $1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 38 pgs
This zine is retarded and that's why I like it. Ray Suburbia seems to have thrown everything together last minute but no page seems particularly wasted. This zine is an easy breezy read, and also had a crossword I was unable to finish while bored at work. There is an interview here with Milwaukee straightedge band Get Rad, which by the way Ray describes them sound awesome: "Hardcore the way it should be—fast, fun, inviting, and serious when it needs to be." I also highly enjoyed the letter written by Ray and his friends to Joey Greco (host of Cheaters who got stabbed!). Apparently they have the

same taste in trash culture as I do, as they herald Greco as being "a wizard scholar and certified American badass!" Buy this zine. (MJ)
Ray Suburbia / 2919 N. Buffum / Milwaukee, WI 53212

**LOVE IN THE TIME OF SCABIES** #4 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 36 pgs
This issue's got some goodies: hilarious interview with Party Garbage, guidelines on how to dumpster-dive for food, and creative writing contributors. Not as good as #3, but still entertaining. The downside to this zine is the comics—maybe I was just too sleep-deprived when I read them but I didn't understand what the fuck was going on. Maybe that was the point. (MJ)
Ray Suburbia / 2919 N. Buffum / Milwaukee, WI 53212

**THE MATCH** #105 / free
9.5 x 6.5 – printed – 72 pgs
Published since 1969, this is a "criticism of, and resistance to, all statist laws and authoritarianism." Most anarchist literature tends to be unnecessarily dry and dense, but *The Match* has clear, relatable writing that is incredibly varied in its scope. Subscription is free (though donations are accepted, of course) so take a look then pass it on to a friend. (AA)
PO Box 3012 / Tucson, AZ 85702

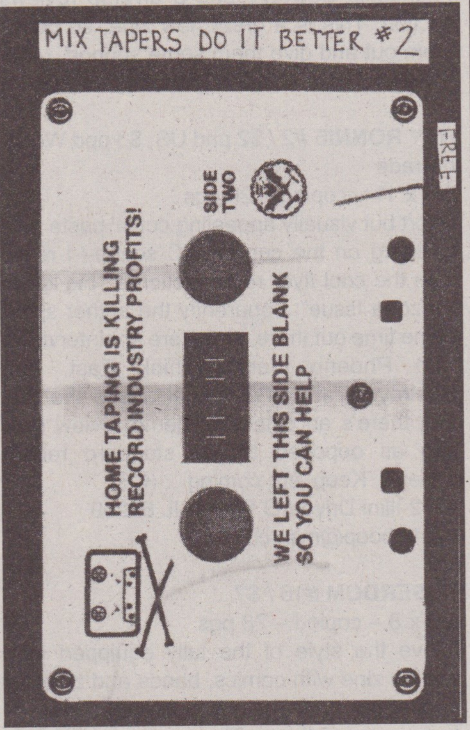
**MISHAP** #22/23 / $3, trade, free to prisoners
5.5 x 8 – copied – 64 pgs
The end of an era, here, as future installments will appear only in cyberspace. A dou-

ble issue closes it out. The first part has stories of punk protests "back in the day," when the editor and his comrades were just starting out. One is by a kid who is implicated in the trashing of a shoe store, but the tale ends abruptly, before we find out if the state was able to exact some kind of retribution. Music releases (yes, fast/crusty, the best kind) that the editor enjoys are briefly profiled, and longer reviews are given to material sent in (not just the same ol'.) The editor explicitly identifies as anarchist, and bemoans the shitty state of the world and this terrible society. The flip is "the fiction issue." At least the stories are short. One is a myth about sea turtles—fucking Eugene. Also on this side are book reviews—the editor is rather widely read, and the reviews are well written. Also included are comics, photocopied pictures of nature scenes, and illustrations of birds. Not a single advertisement appears. If this guy were selling this at a show, I would buy it because he seems pretty right on, but I won't be mourning the end of its printed life. (JM)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405 / mishapzine@yahoo.com

**MIX TAPERS DO IT BETTER** #2 / free or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pgs
This is a cute little zine all about the glorious mix tape, the cornerstone of punk rock distribution. It's no wonder the rise of cassette tapes corresponded with the birth of punk rock. Tapes are really the perfect medium. They don't scratch like CDs, you can record over them, you can hop trains with them, you can decorate them with almost any medium, they don't skip while you ride your bike with them, and you can get tape players in all sizes in any thrift store across America. They do wear out over time, but shit, that's life. There is an article about mix tapes versus mix CDs and iPods and of course, mix tapes won. The thing is, any mix tape you get, you can be sure that someone put a lot of work into it. After reading this zine I realized that all my favorite music is on mix tapes. Long live mix tapes! (DH)
Karen H / 49 Winterhalder Dr. / Zealand, MI 49464
recycled_youth_@hotmail.com

**MOST PUNKS ARE TOTAL ARSEHOLES** #3 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 38 pgs
I really enjoyed reading this zine. Its got a good balance of sarcasm and seriousness. The "How to be The Exploited" article was hilarious and the pissed off columns about Lily Allen and football were very entertaining. Buy this now! (MP)
PO Box 467 / London / E8 3QX / United Kingdom

**THE NIGHT OWL** #1 / SASE
8.5 x 11 – copied – 2 pages
Quick first issue of a one-sheet zine that is basically reviews of music and an interview with Harm's Way. This dude gets major points for having Mott The Hoople in his Top Ten, but then loses 'em by including Oasis! Come on now! Anyways, not bad, I'd like to see it develop more. (NM)
Charlie / 636 Mills Street / Hinsdale, IL 60521




**OX FANZINE** #73 / ?5
8.5 x 12 – printed – 138 pgs – German
The big German punk rock mag. Interviews, columns, reviews, and news—it's got it all. If you want to know how Against Me! sounds saying things in German, here's your chance. They have a shit-ton of interviews, a surprising number actually, ranging from Uruguayan rock band La Vela Puerca to legendary punk bands like Agent Orange and Suicidal Tendencies. There's even an interview with Sonic Youth. As you can see, this fanzine covers a good swath of the music spectrum. Plus it comes with a free CD! (DH)
PO Box 10 22 25 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

**PLANKWALK** #1/ $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24pgs
Nick, the author of *Plankwalk*, decided to write this zine after he spent two months on a European tour with his friends Magrudergrind. Much of the zine is Nick's personal tour diary from Europe. He talks about the ups and downs of the tour, tells stories about his bouts with explosive diarrhea, and is honest in his opinion of the people he encounters. Aside from the tour diary, there are record reviews, personal stories, opinion pieces, an interview with Yacopsae and a column written by his friend/bandmate stating his reasons for moving away from Washington, DC. The music covered in this zine is mostly of the grind and straight-edge variety and while I am not a fan of those genres I still found this zine enjoyable to read. Nick is young, enthusiastic, and honest and it shows in his writing. (CI)
plankwalk@misfirerecords.com

**POOP STAINS** #2 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
A little zine that mainly focuses on an Arizona road trip to Cali and back. Contained within the pages are a few live show reviews, a brief article about depression and being a "cutter," a couple record reviews, and a short tribute to a recently defunct Tucson punk house. There is also an article about girls that I find a bit (for lack of a better term) "uneducated" that fits in with overall feel of this zine, which is that of "inexperience." I understand that you may know a bunch "controlling and conniving" females and also that you know a few "cool girls," but I'm sure you also know plenty of shitty dudes—probably more! My only problem is, why focus the anger based on gender instead of the fact that they may just be shitty people? It's not that this article is over-the-top offensive, I just find it reactionary and poorly thought out, and I couldn't let it slide by without putting in my two cents. (JU)
Erik Meyer / 201 E. Hyde Street / Tuscon, AZ 85704
girlproblems@hotmail.com

**SCENE NOT HERD** #1 / $4 or trade
11 x 17 – printed – 42 pages + CD-R
Standard "magazine" style magazine with three ranting columnists touching on the following subjects: flipped-up collars, bandana usage, Bam Margera, Ozzfest, phonetography, moshing, Hot Topic, a Buddhist look at being a social loser, three full pages on how Sonic Youth got lazy, and some optional baseball predictions. Included are four interviews with McRakins, Parkway Wretch, The Hickmans, and The Trashies, who are pop punk and of the trash core groups respectively. All are featured on a twenty-seven track CD-R that is more of a mix-tape. There are five pages of top ten favorite bands lists and seven pages of music reviews. At it's best, it is a window into the Longview/Kelso Washington scene by its vets; at it's worst, the frustrations of beer enthusiasts. (ML)
Eric Lolligagger / 1623 8th Avenue, Apt. 2 / Longview, WA 98632
scenenotherdzine@hotmail.com

**SMEAR CAMPAIGN** #9 / $2 or trade?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32pgs
This zine was given to me by some friendly folk while on a trip to Portland. I happened to be in the right place at the right time—a bar where The New Bloods and Mika Miko had just played. So, I didn't doubt the zine-makers' good taste, and obviously couldn't wait until my night vision corrected itself through sleep, enough to read anyway. A drawing of some old punk dude on the back that read "Old punks go home" got us laughing as we hopped on our bikes to do just that. This is, to me, exactly what a zine should be: imaginative cut 'n' paste collages with humor and smarts. The frozen dinner reviews were not far from brilliant. The re-vamped celebrity smears were also well done and reminded me of a childhood spent making similar mini-mags with friends, up late, laughing till we peed. Fun to make fun, fun to read, fun fun! (DS)
smearcampaign@hotmail.com

**SQUART** #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 14 pgs
Close your eyes and think of the last time you went to a show by yourself. Think of how you wanted to make friends but you didn't know how to start a conversation, right after you moved to a new town. I remember I was sitting on the stage kind of staring off into an amplifier when a kid walked up to me and handed me this very zine (and here I am reviewing it a few years later). He said he liked my studded vest, I liked his patchy pants, we maybe saw each other before. That's why zine culture is great, because it lets the awkward people forge friendships. Anyway, this type of zine represents that spirit of interacting, about bringing together minds and ideas. It's about reclaiming space and making art for each other. Pretty much this whole issue is an interview about an art show put up in an abandoned building. The title of the zine is Squat + Art, and since it is just this one interview it doesn't exactly tackle the problem of "property" per se, but it provides inspiration, and basically serves as a reminder that we don't have be limited by the dichotomy of either galleries or graffiti, that there is a middle ground for public art and for public spaces to be used. I would like to see this theme go further than this tiny issue, especially since it is practically three years old. C'mon Bridge, show us what else is happening. (JB)
mtbikes@riseup.net

**TRASH** #13-16 / Free
13 x 8 – copied
I'm putting all four of these issues in one review because they all blend together anyway. This zine covers no new music; the author just writes about his favorite bands in a jumbled and non-connecting way. What this zine is really good for is wallpaper because there are so many pictures, and most are big. The author covers a weird combination of bands, from the Dead Boys to '70s glam and Hall and Oates. Go figure. (MJ)

**TREBLE HIGH, TALENT LOW** #3 / $?
7 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Teenage music zines! Oh how I've missed you! Here is a sleep-deprived, all-over-the-place little music zine from a young man in Eastern New York. It includes praise for the Electric Eels frontman Dave E, an interview with Reagan SS, really entertaining show reviews for The Vicious and Total Fury, and best of all, a page dedicated to why Vanilla Fudge is the worst band ever. Right on. (AA)
Brandon Gaffney / Perry Hall #106 / Buffalo State College / PO BOX 5127 / Buffao, NY 14222

**US VS THEM** #3 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
Like Dee Dee said, "It's a sick world, sick, sick, sick. It's a hopeless life, I hate, it, hate it." So here's another fanzine fueled by a delicate balance of disillusionment and anger, and propelled by a love for good old-style hardcore. First, an interview with No Way Records, band Social Circkle, who's song "Static Eyes" from the EP of the same name is *sooo* good. Also, check out an interview with Life Trap, '80s-style hardcore from Tennessee. There's interviews with youngins Cut Sick and Straight Jacket Nation, both from Australia. But wait, there's more...an interview with Cardiac Arrest who can be found on the *No Bullshit vol. 2* EP, and an interview with Virginia band Socialcide. If you have questions, this zine might have the answer, or at least some other answer. (CH)
xbeauvsthemx@hotmail.com

**WUCHERPREIS!** #21 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 68 pages – German
If Deutsche pogo punk is your thing, you need this. Part zine and part catalog for the prolific Scumfuck label. Some articles, columns, info about shows, reviews, some bigger name German punk bands info. If you happen to live in Europe this may be of more use, but if you're a diehard Deutschpunk fan this is truly required. (NM)
Scumfuck / PSF 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany

**YOU DON'T GET THERE FROM HERE** #4 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs
This comic-a-day zine is an admitted *Snakepit* rip-off. The drawing style is pretty much exactly the same, and just like *Snakepit* each day is a three-panel strip with a song as the title. But I feel that Carrie fails to make herself a sympathetic character, as Ben Snakepit does. *You Don't Get There From Here* is one of those per-zines where you get to know the writer way too well and you get really frustrated with their weird neuroses. For me, it's hard to bear, but maybe this is zine heaven for you? (PC)
Carrie McNinch / PO Box 49403 / Los Angeles, CA 90049
cmcninch@gmail.com

**ZINE WORLD** #25 / $4 US, $5 Canada
8.5 x 11 – printed – 48 pgs
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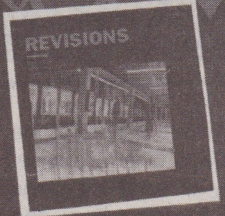


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Sunday 14 (5PM SHOW)
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Friday 19 $6
Black Fag (L.A.) • Tippers Gore (L.A.)
Warkrime • Sabertooth Zombie • Lost Boys

Saturday 20 $7
Hellshock (OR) • Age (Japan) • Worldeater
Sahn Maru (Record Release) • Devils Son In Law

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Saturday 27 $7 (DOORS @ 7:00)
*Gilman's pre-Halloween Bash Day 2*
The Flames • Stellar Corpses • Bitchfits (Misfits tribute)
Plastic-o-matics (L.A.) (Plasmatics tribute)
Sik Luv • Throat Oyster

Sunday 28 (4PM SHOW)
*Gilman's pre-Halloween Bash Day 3*
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Punch (Descendents) • Crucial Cause (Antidote)
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**MY NAME IS RANDY CORDERO** but all of my friends call me Joker 'cause of my "Live Young at Heart" personality. I'm a 31-year-old punk rocker from Whittier, California. Born and raised in the Los Angeles punk scene since I was about 8. I'm into all kinds of bands like A-18, Verbal Abuse, Social Unrest, Subhumans, DRI, Fear, Etc. I'm bad-ass at drawing and I love tattooing, shootin' pool, skateboarding, camping, fishing, gigs, action, and scary movies and some philosophy. I get out in a year so put that pen to paper and write me. Randy Cordero #T-37551 / SATF D-1 #205 / PO Box 5242 / Corcoran, CA 93212

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